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# THE NEW YORKER

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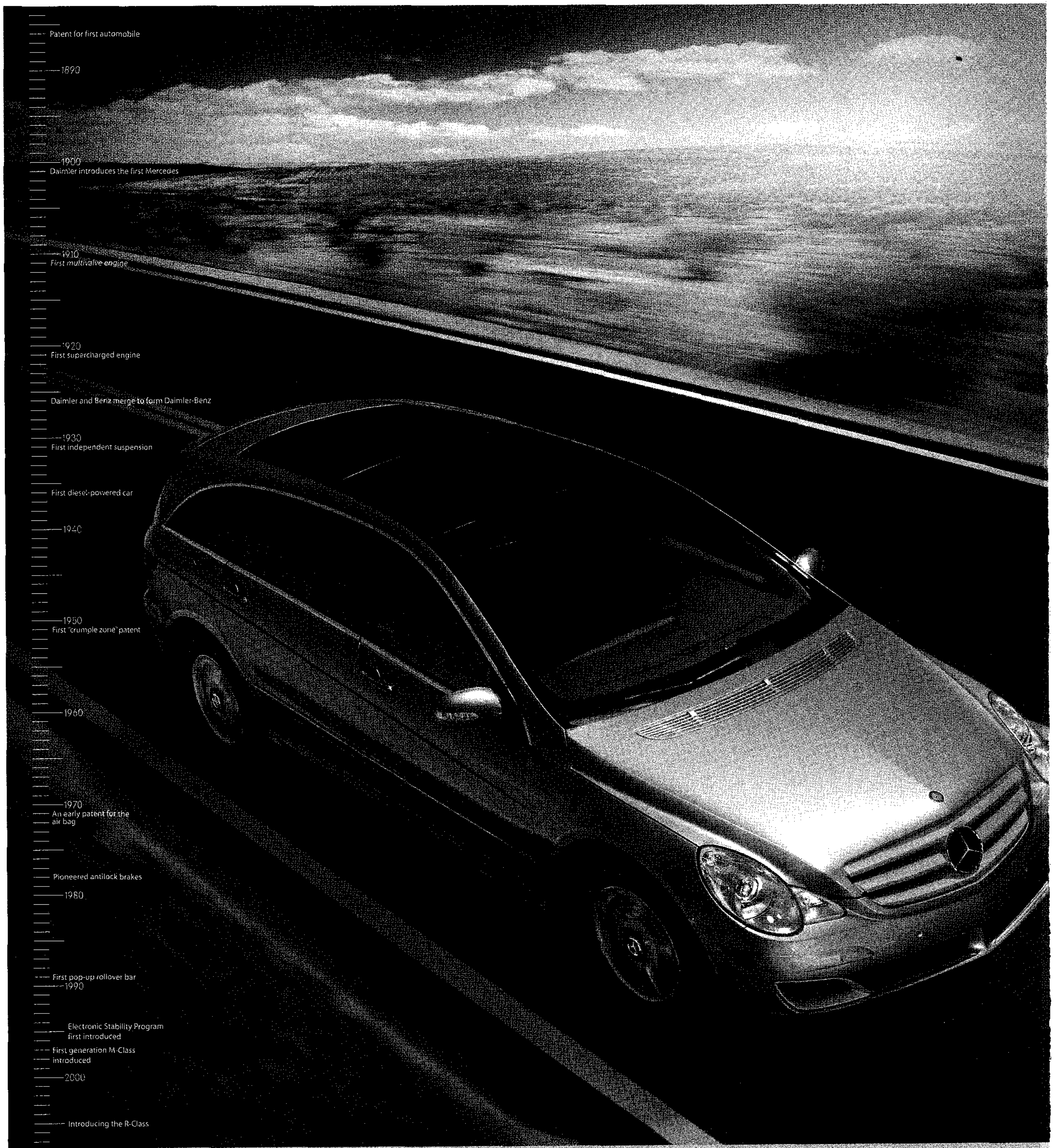
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1890
1900
Daimler introduces the first Mercedes
1910
First multivalve engine
1920
First supercharged engine
Daimler and Benz merge to form Daimler-Benz
1930
First independent suspension
First diesel-powered car
1940
1950
First "crumple zone" patent
1960
1970
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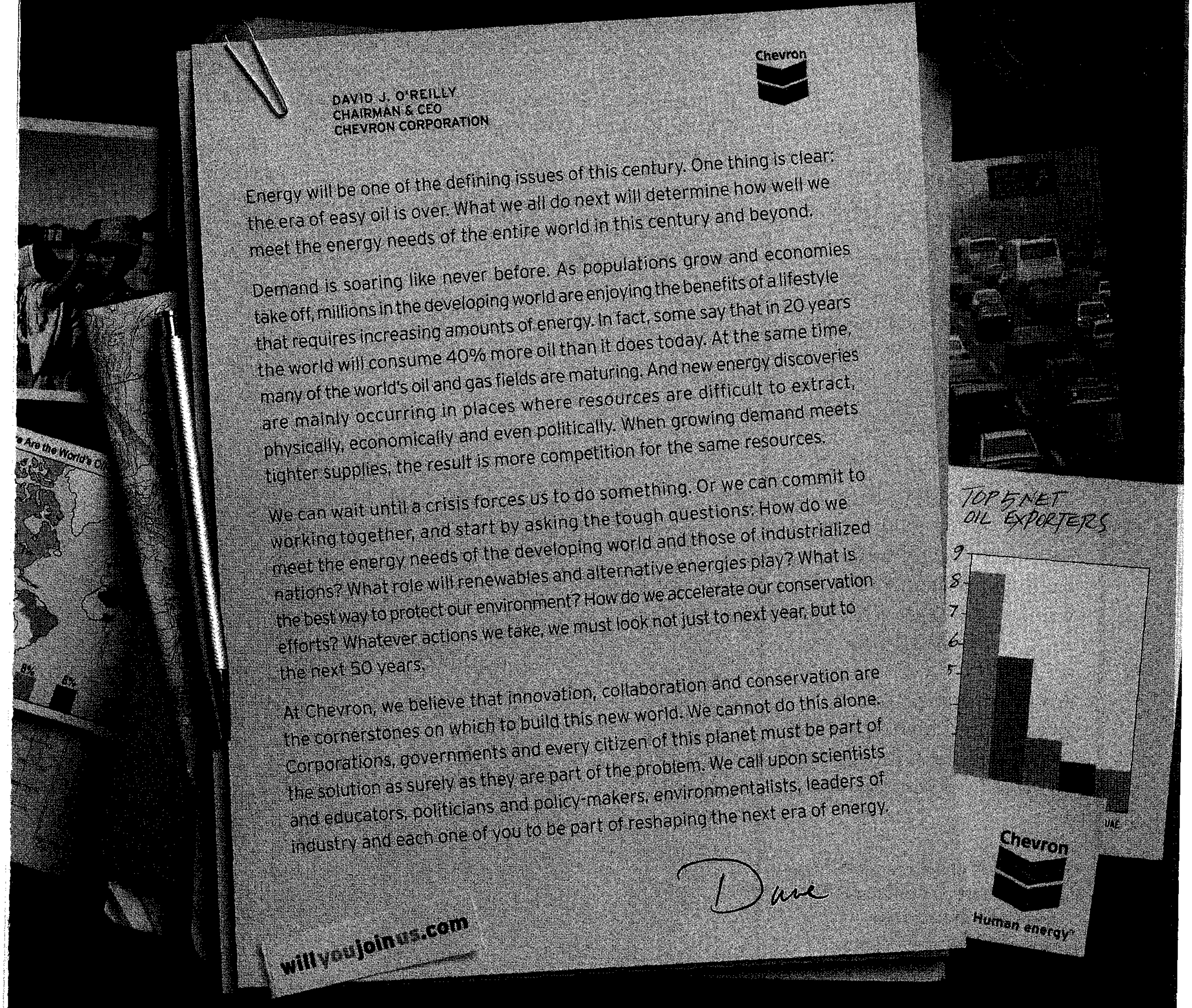

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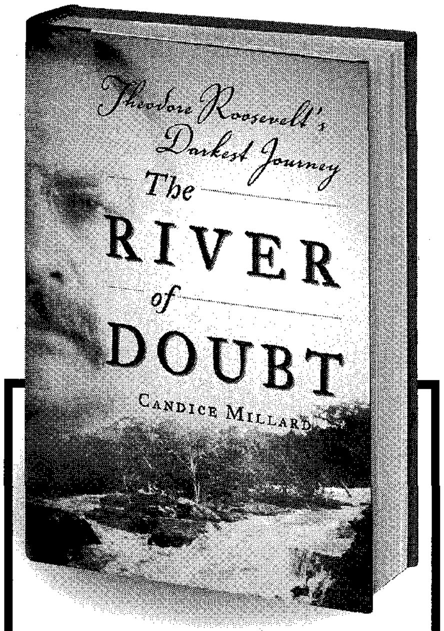

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# CONTRIBUTORS

Jeffrey Toobin (The Talk of the Town, p. 30; "Breyer's Big Idea," p. 36) has been a staff writer since 1993.

George Packer (Comment, p. 29; Books, p. 82) is the author of "The Assassins' Gate: America in Iraq," which came out earlier this month.

Paul Slansky (Shouts & Murmurs, p. 44) has co-written, with Arleen Sorkin, "My Bad: 25 Years of Public Apologies and the Appalling Behavior That Inspired Them," which is due out in May.

Oliver Sacks ("Recalled to Life," p. 46) is a physician who practices neurology in New York City. He is the author of nine books, including "The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat" and "Awakenings."

Ian Falconer (Cover) will publish his fourth children's book, "Olivia Forms a Band," in the spring.

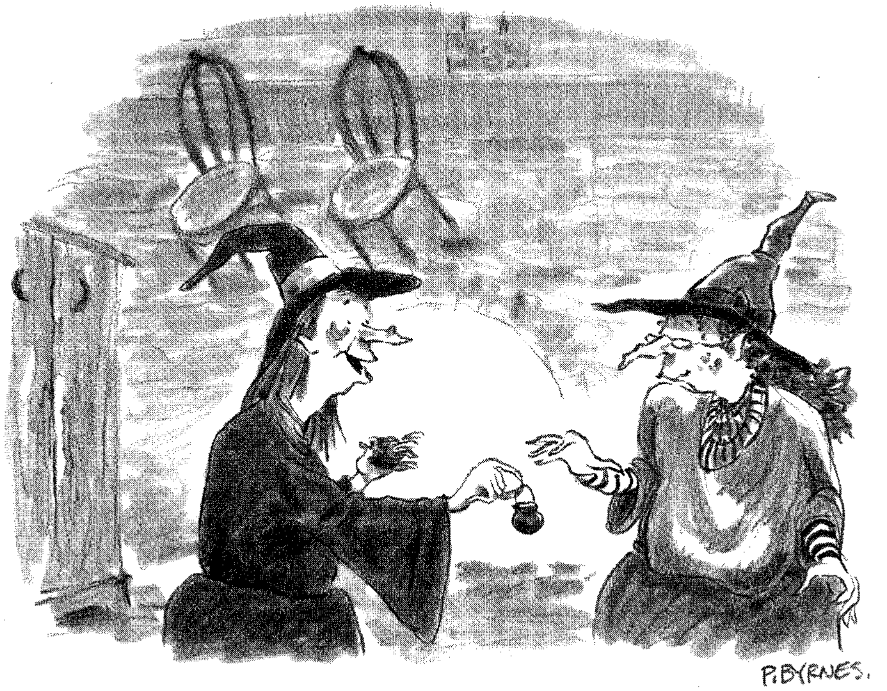
Jeffrey Goldberg ("Breaking Ranks," p. 54) is a political correspondent who writes the Letter from Washington.

Elizabeth Spires (Poem, p. 62) has published five collections of poems, including "Now the Green Blade Rises."

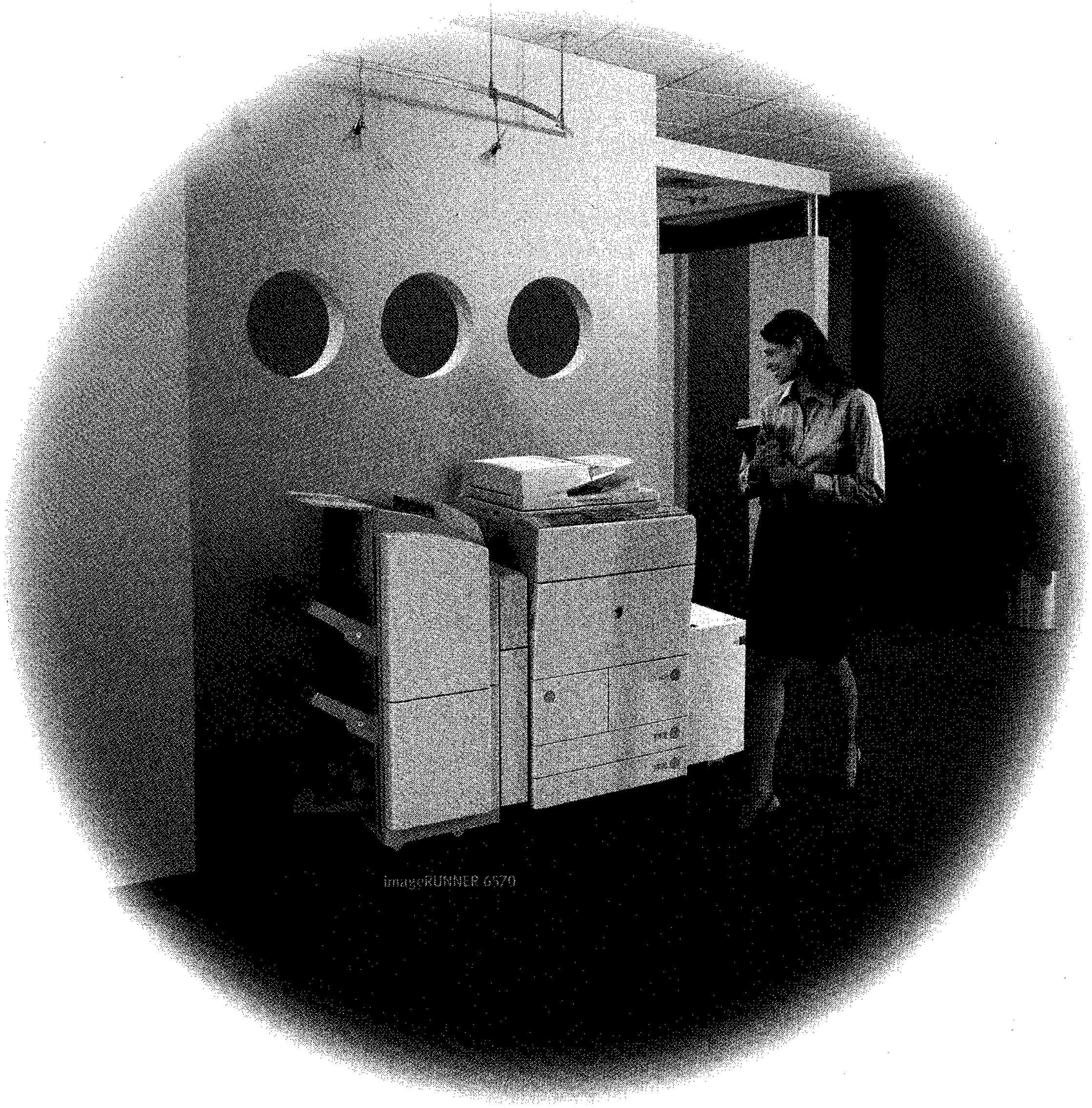
Adam Gopnik (A Critic at Large, p. 66), a staff writer, is the author of "Paris to the Moon" and "The King in the Window," a children's book, which has just been published.

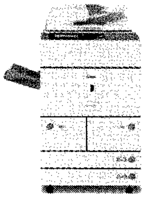
William Trevor (Fiction, p. 74) has written fifteen novels and eleven collections of short stories, including, most recently, "A Bit on the Side."

John Lahr (The Theatre, p. 92) is the senior theatre critic for the magazine. His book "Honky Tonk Parade: *New Yorker* Profiles of Show People" came out this month. ♦



*"It's one of those microbrews."*

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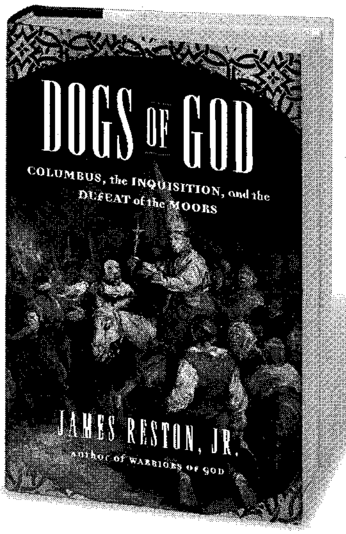
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# THE MAIL

## AFTER THE DELUGE

Nicholas Lemann describes New Orleans as "the opposite of a city that works," and implies that the failure of "every single system associated with the life of a city" following the levee breaks demonstrates an incompetence unique to the city (Comment, September 12th). However, failure of the electric grid and telephone systems in a hurricane is highly probable if the lines are aboveground. It is neither technologically nor economically feasible to design these lines to survive storms with hundred-mile-an-hour winds. And burying such lines is challenging in the wet swampy soil of southern Louisiana. Once the electricity goes out, telephone and cell towers can continue to run on backup generators and batteries for about eight to twelve hours, until the batteries run down or the generators run out of gas. Once all communications systems are down, the operation of the police and fire departments is bound to be compromised. All these systems would be vulnerable to failure in any city flooded to the extent and with the rapidity that New Orleans was, even without a hurricane. Once the flood wall failed, the rest followed more or less inevitably.

*Reade King*
*Montague, Mass.*

Lemann, in his discussion of the "blame game" between Louisiana and Washington, mentions the charge that "the Administration tried to persuade the governor of Louisiana, Kathleen Blanco, to issue an official request that the federal government take control of the Louisiana National Guard and the New Orleans police, but she refused" (Comment, September 26th). He then discusses historical instances in which the federal government has seen fit to intervene without invitation. However, when Blanco officially requested Bush to declare a state of emergency, on August 27th, she said, "I have determined that this incident is of such severity and magnitude that effective response is beyond the capabilities of the state and affected local governments, and that supplementary federal assistance is necessary to save lives, protect property, public health, and safety, or to lessen or avert the threat of a disaster." Surely this would have been sufficient justification for earlier federal intervention in law enforcement. The question ought to be why the federal government did so little to heed Blanco's requests in a timely fashion, not what it should have done in the absence of such a request.

*Elizabeth Putnam*
*New York City*

Lemann offers a provocative commentary on the role of federal intervention in the protection of African-American rights through history. One point, however, merits clarification. Lemann writes that federal troops were withdrawn from the South in 1877, at the end of Reconstruction, ostensibly to restore normal governance. But the withdrawal of troops also occurred in the context of a hotly disputed Presidential election, between the Republican Rutherford B. Hayes and the Democrat Samuel J. Tilden. Tilden had won the popular vote and led by nineteen votes in the Electoral College. But fraud and violence in the South had left conflicting returns in South Carolina, Louisiana, and Florida—a total of nineteen electoral votes, in addition to one contested electoral vote in Oregon. A bicameral congressional commission negotiated a shabby deal in which Hayes received the contested Electoral College votes—and the Presidency—effectively in exchange for the withdrawal of federal troops. Everyone involved knew that this move would undermine whatever advances African-Americans had been able to make during Reconstruction.

*Robin Berson*
*New York City*

•

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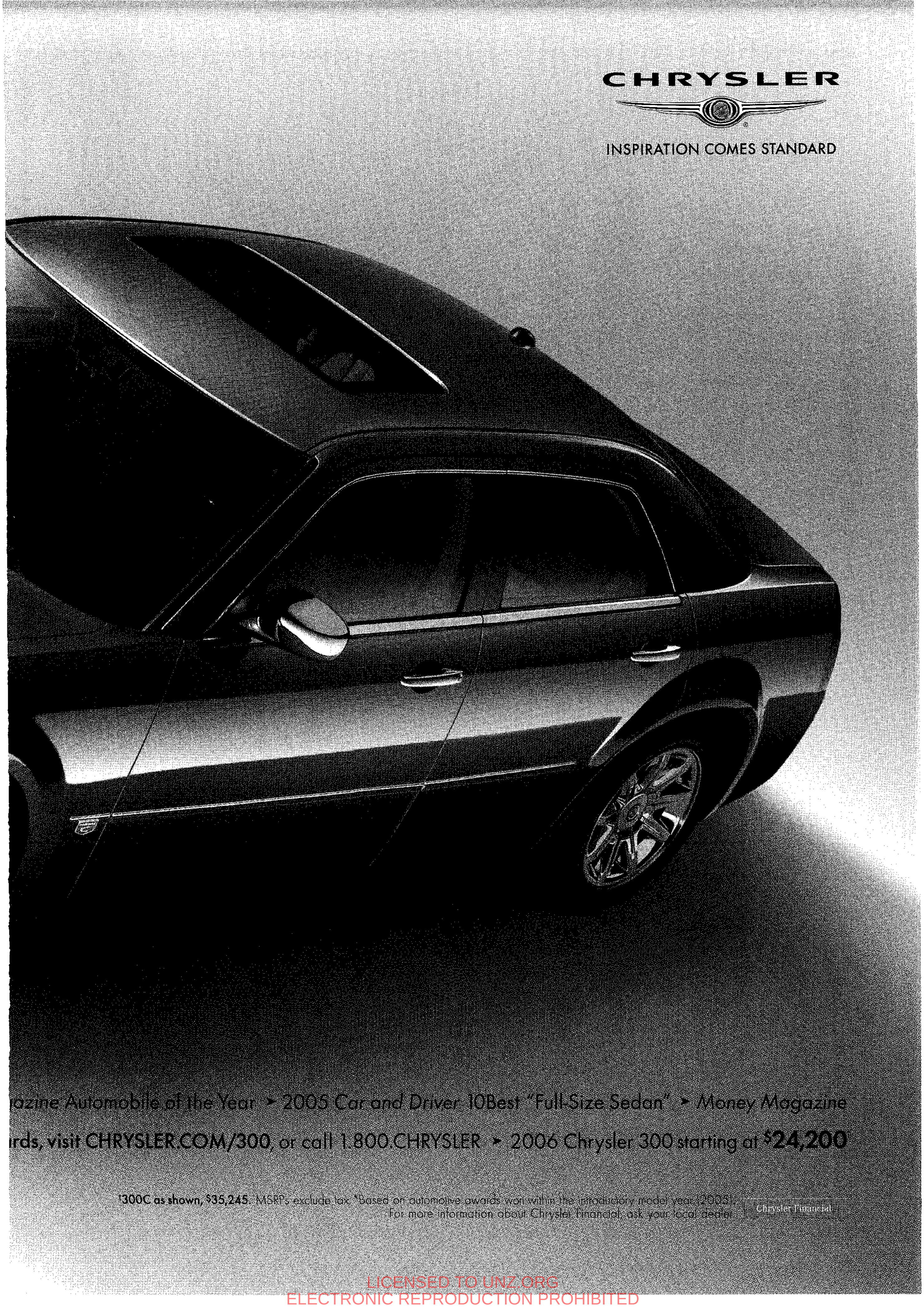

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*Aquila Theatre Company's "The Invisible Man." Photograph by Sylvia Plachy.*

# GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 30 | 31 | 1 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |

## THIS WEEK

### THE THEATRE
### ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Playwrights Horizons presents "Manic Flight Reaction," a new comedy by the novelist and playwright Sarah Schulman, about a professor whose daughter discovers her past lesbian relationship with a woman who is now married to a Presidential candidate. (See page 14.)

### NIGHT LIFE
### WITCHING HOUR

The Tiger Lillies, the London trio who spooked New Yorkers earlier this year by providing accompaniment for the macabre musical-theatre piece "Shockheaded Peter," return for a Halloween show in Brooklyn. (See page 16.)

### ART
### REVISITING SCHIELE

Though the Austrian artist Egon Schiele died young, at the age of twenty-eight (both he and his wife were claimed by the influenza epidemic of 1918), he left behind an important legacy. The Neue Galerie has opened its retrospective of Schiele's drawings, paintings, and prints, with some hundred and fifty works on display, including many gnarled, handsome portraits stamped with Schiele's particular brand of tragic eros. (See page 19.)

### CLASSICAL MUSIC
### RUSSIAN REDEMPTION

Dmitri Shostakovich, once considered suspect by Western intellectuals, has become one of the most popular and broadly respected composers of the twentieth century. The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center digs deep into his repertory in three concerts, all of which will feature the superb pianist Anne-Marie McDermott. (See page 22.)

### MOVIES
### MIZOGUCHI'S WOMEN

Drawing on classical literature, folk legends, and newspaper headlines, Kenji Mizoguchi pursued, from 1923 to his death, in 1956, one fiercely political theme: the subjugation of women by a patriarchal society. A series of Mizoguchi's films at BAM features classics such as "The Life of Oharu" and "Ugetsu Monogatari," along with the rarely screened "The Story of the Last Chrysanthemum." (See page 25.)

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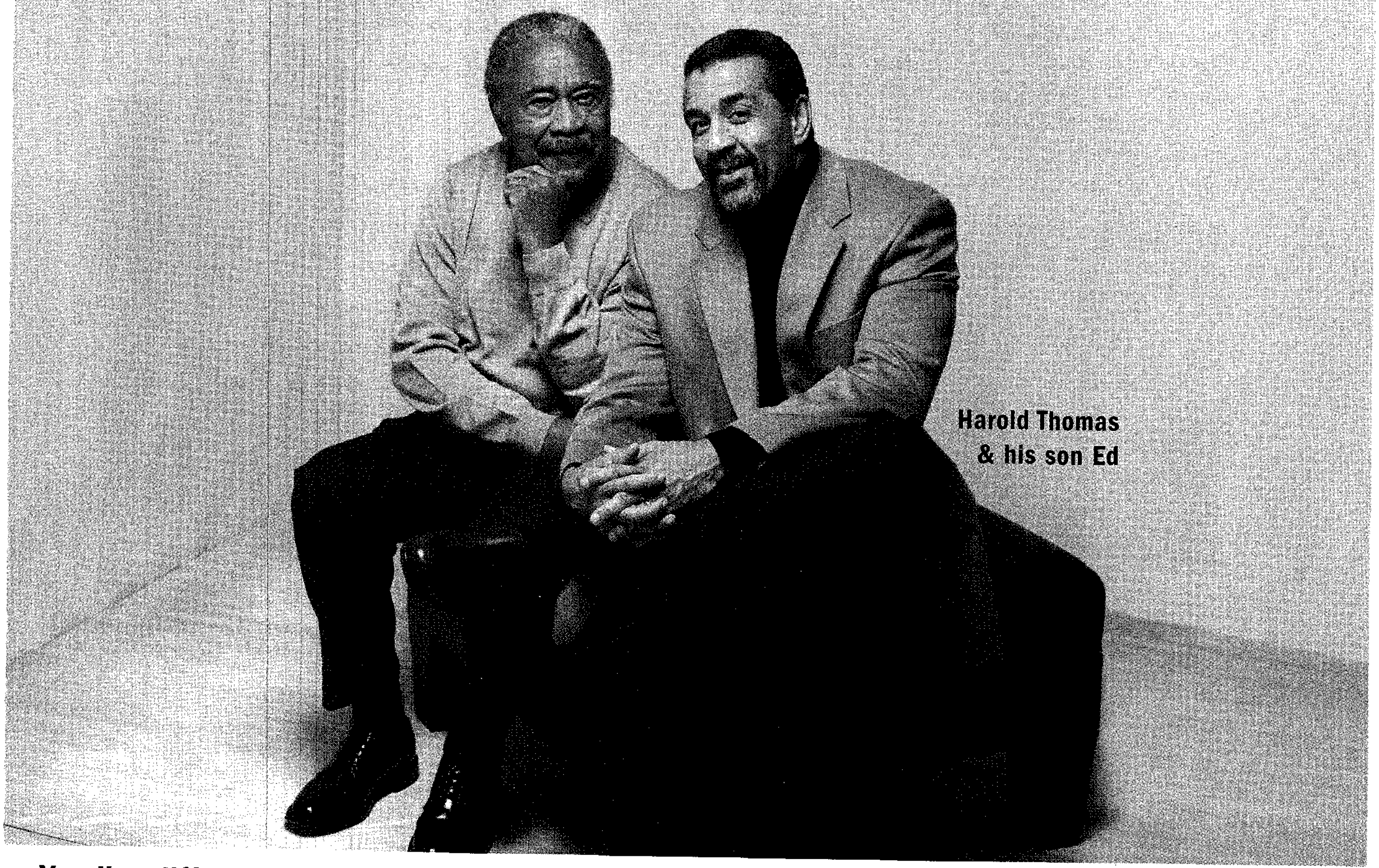

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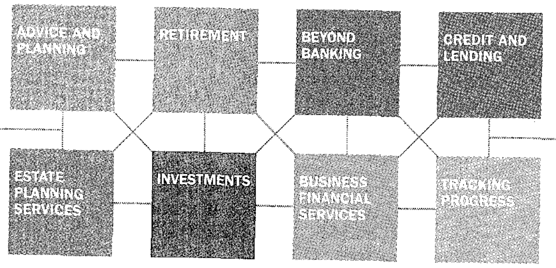

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## CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK
## A GOING CONCERN

The Go! Team, a sprawling six-piece live band, was once just a British musician named Ian Parton playing with a few friends and a stack of obscure soundtracks and pop records. The result, "Thunder, Lightning, Strike," was one of the happiest surprises of last year: a ramshackle collection of sunny sixties soul sprinkled lightly, but not fatally, with eighties hip-hop and nineties guitar rock. After delays arising from sample-clearance issues, Columbia has issued the album here, with two extra tracks and minor musical changes. On the record, the samples establish a bubbly, preschool feeling. The live band achieves the same effect through different means; in concert, the Go! Team is sometimes overwhelmed by samples that sound more authoritative than it does. Parton notwithstanding, there is no doubt about who the onstage leader is—the aerobic, permanently cheery singer Ninja, who sometimes solicits dance routines from the crowd. The band plays on Nov. 2 at Webster Hall; bring your best moves, or a note explaining the lack thereof.

—*Sasha Frere-Jones*

## THE THEATRE
## OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

*Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.*

**BACH AT LEIPZIG**
In this play inspired by actual events and written by Itamar Moses, seven rival musicians fight to fill the post of organ master at Leipzig. Directed by Pam MacKinnon. Previews begin Oct. 28. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 212-239-6200.)

**CAMBODIA AGONISTES**
Pan Asian Repertory Theatre launches its twenty-ninth season with a musical incorporating traditional Cambodian dance and masks, in which a blind Cambodian dancer in New York reflects on her home country's civil war and genocide. Previews begin Oct. 29. (West End, 263 W. 86th St. 212-279-4200.)

**THE INVISIBLE MAN**
The Aquila Theatre Company collaborates with the choreographer Doug Varone to present a theatre-and-dance collaboration based on H. G. Wells's classic novel. In previews. Opens Oct. 27. (Baruch Performing Arts Center, 25th St. between Lexington and Third Aves. 212-279-4200.)

**JERSEY BOYS**
At the recently renamed August Wilson Theatre, a new musical about how Frankie Valli and the other members of the Four Seasons came up from blue-collar roots to form the successful pop group. Directed by Des McAnuff, with music by Bob Gaudio, book by Marshall Brickman and Rick Elice, and lyrics by Bob Crewe. In previews. (245 W. 52nd St. 212-239-6200.)

**MANIC FLIGHT REACTION**
Playwrights Horizons presents a new comedy by Sarah Schulman, about a woman whose daughter discovers her past affair with a current Presidential candidate's wife. The cast includes Deirdre O'Connell and Molly Price. In previews. Opens Oct. 30. (416 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200.)

**A MOTHER, A DAUGHTER AND A GUN**
Olympia Dukakis, Veanne Cox, and George S. Irving star in a new comedy by Barra Grant, about the emotional relationship between mothers and daughters. Jonathan Lynn ("My Cousin Vinny") directs. In previews. Opens Nov. 1. (Dodger Stages, 340 W. 50th St. 212-239-6200.)

**NORMAL**
The Transport Group presents a musical about a family dealing with a daughter suffering from an eating disorder. The cast includes Barbara Walsh ("Hairspray"), Adam Heller, and Erin Leigh Peck. With book by Yvonne Adrian, lyrics by Cheryl Stern, and music by Tom Kochan. Jack Cummings III directed. In previews. Opens Oct. 30. (Connelly, 220 E. 4th St. 212-352-3101.)

**THE ODD COUPLE**
Neil Simon's classic play stars Nathan Lane as the slovenly sportswriter Oscar Madison and Matthew Broderick as the fastidious photographer Felix Ungar. Joe Mantello directs. Opens Oct. 27. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 212-307-4100.)

**SEASCAPE**
Edward Albee's Pulitzer Prize-winning play, about two couples who meet on a beach and contemplate life, death, and consciousness. With George Grizzard, Elizabeth Marvel, Frances Sternhagen, and Frederick Weller. Previews begin Oct. 28. (Booth Theatre, 222 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.)

**SEE WHAT I WANNA SEE**
A new musical at the Public by Michael John LaChiusa ("The Wild Party"), loosely based on the short stories of Ryunosuke Akutagawa, tells contemporary New York tales of loss and hope. The ensemble cast includes Idina Menzel and Mary Testa. Directed by Ted Sperling. In previews. Opens Oct. 30. (425 Lafayette St. 212-539-8500.)

**SWEENEY TODD**
The innovatively staged revival of Stephen Sondheim's musical thriller from 1979 comes to Broadway by way of London. John Doyle's production stars Michael Cerveris ("Assassins") as the vengeful barber and Patti LuPone as his co-conspirator. In previews. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 212-239-6200.)

## NOW PLAYING

**ABSURD PERSON SINGULAR**
The Manhattan Theatre Club's revival of Alan Ayckbourn's play, directed by John Tillinger. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Biltmore, 261 W. 47th St. 212-239-6200.)

**ASHLEY MONTANA GOES ASHORE IN THE CAICOS . . . OR WHAT AM I DOING HERE?**
The author Roger Rosenblatt brings his mercurial, peppery wit to the task of anatomizing the current cultural mood. The resulting field guide to absurdity is nailed by the cast of four pros (Bebe Neuwirth, Jeffrey DeMunn, Jenn Harris, and James Waterston), who exchange wry observations and even hazard a torch song to John Ashcroft. The actors expertly deliver rapid-fire vignettes about television news, Michael D. Brown's post-FEMA career options—a piano bar in New Orleans—and, of course, the eponymous Ashley Montana, a *Sports Illustrated* swimsuit model whose curvy, enhanced image is a kind of emblem of the age's inanity. Sharply directed by Jim Simpson. (The Flea, 41 White St. 212-352-3101.)

**BEOWULF**
The Irish Rep's musical version of the eighth-century epic poem has operatic aspirations, an overflowing score by the "Saturday Night Live" musical director Lenny Pickett, and a cast of seven men, dolled up in togas, whose pure voices resound handsomely in the small house. Nonetheless, the production is an odd mix of clashing elements, including church-basement pageantry, an ethereal Celtic harpist, sword fights with "Forbidden Planet"-style monsters, and some striking puppetry, including a wonderful crocodile with clacking jaws. For all the imagination on display, the director, Charlotte Moore, hasn't quite assembled the pieces into a coherent whole, or given us a sense of why this particular epic is still relevant. (132 W. 22nd St. 212-727-2737.)

**EINSTEIN'S GIFT**
In a new work by the Canadian playwright Vern Thiessen, the iconic physicist (Shawn Elliott) clashes over scientific ethics with Fritz Haber (Aasif Mandvi), whose supervision of chlorine-gas attacks during the First World War helped pioneer chemical warfare. Haber, a Jew by birth who abandoned his religion, clung fiercely to his German patriotism until the rise of Hitler finally drove him into exile. Despite the fertile subject matter, Ron Russell's production, presented by the Epic Theatre Center, tends to drag, and Einstein himself remains on the sidelines, where he acts mostly as the play's frumpy narrator. (Acorn, 410 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200.)

**FIVE COURSE LOVE**
Gregg Coffin's new musical is packed with variety-show schlock. Heather Ayers and John Bolton play five courting couples and Jeff Gurner plays their waiter at five ill-starred dinners. In quick succession, the actors sing for their suppers at a barbecue joint (a blind date between nerd and nympho), a trattoria (a tawdry Mafia tryst), a German *Speiseplatz* (a Teutonic S & M threesome), a Spanish cantina (Zorro meets Rosalinda), and a "Happy Days"-style burger joint. The game cast have strong, appealing voices and make the best of Coffin's goofy skits, but "Five Course Love" fails to satisfy. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane. 212-307-4100.)

**4.48 PSYCHOSE**
Isabelle Huppert stars in this French-language version of the English playwright Sarah Kane's final play, about her own psychological breakdown. With abridged English titles. (BAM Harvey Theatre, 651 Fulton St., Brooklyn. 718-636-4100. Through Oct. 30.)

**IN MY LIFE**
A romance between a musician with Tourette's syndrome and an obsessive-compulsive journalist is the subject of this new musical written and directed by Joseph Brooks, the composer of the pop ballad "You Light Up My Life." (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200.)

**KARLA**
The Culture Project presents a new play by the Grammy-winning alt-country singer Steve Earle,

TOMER HANUKA

about Karla Faye Tucker, the first woman in Texas to receive the death penalty since the Civil War. (45 Below, 45 Bleecker St. 212-352-3101.)

**LATINOLOGUES**
A collection of comic and thoughtful monologues about the Latino experience in America. Directed by Cheech Marin and written by Rick Najera. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200.)

**THE MASTER BUILDER**
In this ably directed revival at the Pearl, Shepard Sobel focusses on explicating Ibsen's antihero, the architect Halvard Solness (Dan Daily), and his epic vision of himself as a god in human form whose work not only defines nature but surpasses it. To realize his grandiose plan, Solness swallows whole the weaker people who must feed it—among them his wily, long-suffering wife (Robin Leslie Brown, in an astonishing performance) and Ragnar (the equally arresting Sean McNall), the underling whose artistry is appropriated by Solness. Sad to say, though, McNall and Brown are the only relevant features in an otherwise embalmed, overly historicized production. (Reviewed in our issue of 10/17/05.) (80 St. Marks Pl. 212-598-9802. Through Oct. 30.)

**A NAKED GIRL ON THE APPIAN WAY**
In a new Roundabout production, the playwright Richard Greenberg's distinctly American age phobia dovetails with his fear of women: he believes, it seems, that once a woman is no longer "pretty," she becomes a wreck of negative feelings. It is those feelings that Bess (Jill Clayburgh), a cookbook author and mother of three racially diverse, adopted, now adult children, tries to keep at bay. Greenberg wants "Appian Way" to show us that nothing in upper-middle-class life appears to be what it is. But, although the actors—particularly Clayburgh—give the production their all, the cacophony of one-liners and the rush of secrets exposed in the last minutes make this fast-paced show a rather shallow experience. (10/17/05) (American Airlines Theatre, 227 W. 42nd St. 212-719-1300.)

**SLUT**
The title of this former Fringe Festival hit turns out to be an equal-opportunity term; it refers to a guy named Adam (Andy Karl), who embarks on a mission to sleep with one girl from every country on the globe. Meanwhile, his more timid friend, Dan (Jim Stanek), and Delia (Jenn Colella), an East Village rocker, wrestle with the vagaries of love and debauchery. The musical, written by Ben H. Winters and Stephen Sislen, isn't all that raunchy or subversive—in fact, it's surprisingly wholesome. Still, Gordon Greenberg's snappy direction teases out the script's clever moments. (A.T.A. Theatre, 314 W. 54th St. 212-239-6200.)

**A SOLDIER'S PLAY**
Charles Fuller's Pulitzer Prize-winning drama from 1981. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Second Stage, 307 W. 43rd St. 212-246-4422.)

**THIRD**
Wendy Wasserstein's new play, about a college professor who accuses a student of plagiarism, stars Dianne Wiest, Charles Durning, and Jason Ritter. Directed by Daniel Sullivan. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 212-239-6200.)

**WAR IN PARAMUS**
Barbara Dana wrote much of this affecting family drama in 1970, the year in which it is set, and under Austin Pendleton's sensitive direction it burns with the ache of the times. Fifteen-year-old Thelma (the memorable Anne Letscher) loves Janis Joplin and abhors all forms of dishonesty: school, the war, her older sister's hollow engagement, and the superficial chatter of her unctuous mother (the superb Kate Bushmann). Thelma blurts out what's on her mind and forces other people to feel things—awkwardness, uneasiness, and, ultimately, brute pain. The play's astonishingly clear dialogue sounds as if it had just been released from a time capsule. (Abingdon Theatre Arts Complex, 312 W. 36th St. 212-864-4444.)

## *Also Playing*

**ALTAR BOYZ:** Dodger Stages, 340 W. 50th St. 212-239-6200. **AVENUE Q:** Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. **CHICAGO:** Ambassador, 219 W. 49th St. 212-239-6200. **CHITTY CHITTY BANG BANG:** Hilton, 213 W. 42nd St. 212-307-4100. **CYCLING PAST THE MATTERHORN:** Clurman, 410 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200. **DIRTY ROTTEN SCOUNDRELS:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. **DOUBT:** Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 212-239-6200. **FIDDLER ON THE ROOF:** Minskoff, 200 W. 45th St. 212-307-4100. **FOOLS IN LOVE:** Manhattan Ensemble Theatre, 55 Mercer St. 212-239-6200. **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY: SPECIAL VICTIMS UNIT:** 47th Street Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 212-239-6200. **THE GREAT AMERICAN TRAILER PARK MUSICAL:** Dodger Stages, 340 W. 50th St. 212-239-6200. **HAIRSPRAY:** Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 212-307-4100. **IN THE CONTINUUM:** 59E59, at 59 E. 59th St. 212-279-4200. (Through Oct. 30.) **THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA:** Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 212-239-6200. **MAMMA MIA!:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 212-239-6200. **MONTY PYTHON'S SPAMALOT:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200. **MOVIN' OUT:** Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 212-307-4100. **ONE-MAN STAR WARS TRILOGY:** Lamb's Theatre, 130 W. 44th St. 212-239-6200. **ORSON'S SHADOW:** Barrow Street Theatre, 27 Barrow St. 212-239-6200. **SWEET CHARITY:** Al Hirschfeld, 302 W. 45th St. 212-239-6200. **THOM PAIN (BASED ON NOTHING):** DR2, 103 E. 15th St. 212-239-6200. **THE 25TH ANNUAL PUTNAM COUNTY SPELLING BEE:** Circle in the Square, 50th St. between Broadway and Eighth Ave. 212-239-6200. **WALKING DOWN BROADWAY:** 311 W. 43rd St. 212-315-0231. **WICKED:** Gershwin, 222 W. 51st St. 212-307-4100.

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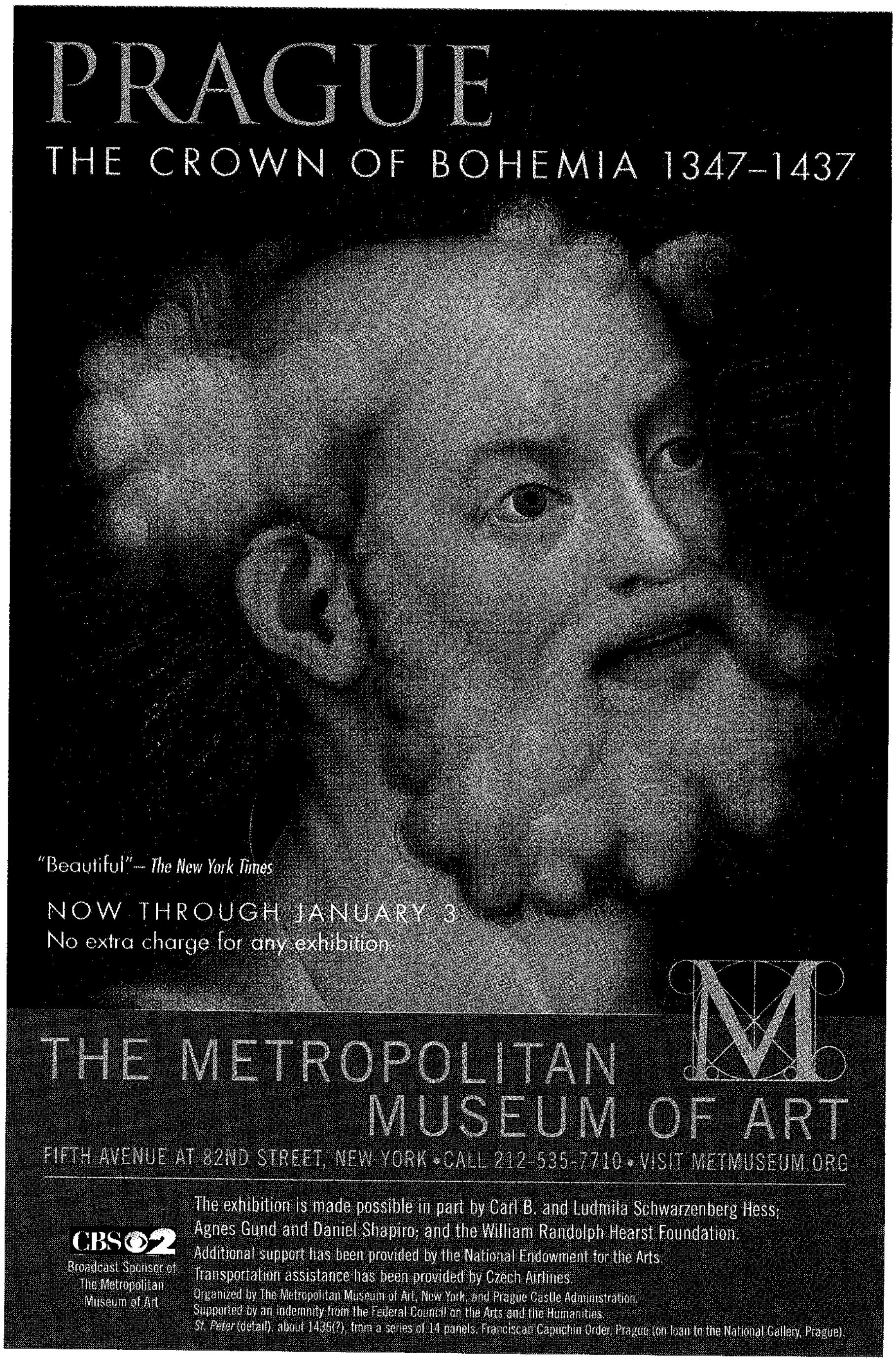
# NIGHT LIFE
## ROCK AND POP

*Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it's advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.*

**B. B. KING BLUES CLUB & GRILL**
237 W. 42nd St. (212-997-4144)—Oct. 27: The Philadelphia neo-soul singer **Jaguar Wright.** Oct. 31: The **Misfits** slithered out of Lodi, New Jersey,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Transportation assistance has been provided by Czech Airlines.
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*St. Peter* (detail), about 1436(?), from a series of 14 panels. Franciscan Capuchin Order, Prague (on loan to the National Gallery, Prague).

in the late seventies like a misbegotten hybrid of the Ramones and early Kiss. The lineup responsible for such ghoulish chestnuts as "Twenty Eyes in My Head" and "Mommy, Can I Go Out and Kill Tonight?" is no more (the original front man, Glenn Danzig, went solo years ago), but the founding bass player, Jerry Only, now counts on the ex-Black Flag vocalist Dez Cadena to cast the appropriate spell.

**BOWERY BALLROOM**

6 Delancey St. (212-533-2111)—Oct. 26: The Minneapolis band **Soul Asylum,** best known for the song "Runaway Train," from its 1992 album, "Grave Dancer's Union," lost its founding bassist, Karl Mueller, earlier this year when he died of throat cancer. Tommy Stinson, originally of the Replacements, fills in for him here. Oct. 27: The shimmering guitars of **Ambulance, Ltd.** Oct. 29: The indie singer-songwriter John Darnielle, who records as the **Mountain Goats.**

**CANAL ROOM**

285 West Broadway (212-941-8100)—Oct. 28: The **English Beat.** Though VH-1's program "Bands Reunited" failed in its attempt last year to bring back the original lineup of the eighties ska-pop sensation, the front man, Dave Wakeling, continues to play "Mirror in the Bathroom" and other hits by the band and by his successful duo, General Public.

**CUTTING ROOM**

19 W. 24th St. (212-691-1900)—Oct. 27: The **Bedsit Poets,** a local group featuring the British vocalists Edward Rogers and Amanda Thorpe, deliver tender originals that have an early-sixties innocence. With the **Sharp Things.**

**HAMMERSTEIN BALLROOM**

Manhattan Center, 311 W. 34th St. (212-307-7171)—Oct. 29: Washington's **MXPX** and Ohio's **Relient K,** two highly successful acts in the burgeoning Jesus-friendly pop-punk scene, pair teen-age adrenaline with reverence for the Lord.

**IRVING PLAZA**

17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (212-777-6800)—Oct. 28: A night of hip noise with **Black Dice.** Oct. 29: The former Phish bassist **Mike Gordon** is touring with **Leo Kottke,** an adventurous six- and twelve-string guitarist who has been making great acoustic-guitar records since the seventies.

**JOE'S PUB**

425 Lafayette St. (212-539-8777)—Oct. 27: The sitarist and vocalist **Anoushka Shankar,** the daughter of the sitar superstar Ravi Shankar and the half-sister of the vocalist Norah Jones, celebrates the release of her latest album, "Rise." Nov. 1: **Tarantula AD,** a New York-based string-heavy trio, constructs anguished soundscapes.

**LIVING ROOM**

154 Ludlow St. (212-533-7235)—**Tony Scherr** plays the bass for Bill Frisell, Sex Mob, and other musicians and bands, but he also produces records (at home in an eight-track analog studio) and plays the electric guitar with an impressive slide touch. On Oct. 26, expect Scherr—who was once described as "Johnny Cash on acid" by a Danish newspaper—to play his own alt-rock numbers of love and loss, plus a cover or two from his latest work as a producer, "The Agoraphobic Cowboy." The album is a collection of ironic and urbane songs written and sung by the actor Rick Moranis, who may or may not be coaxed to leave his own living room and join Scherr here.

**MADISON SQUARE GARDEN**

Seventh Ave. at 33rd St. (212-307-7171)—Oct. 29: **Audioslave** features the former Soundgarden vocalist, Chris Cornell, in front of the guitar player and volatile rhythm section from Rage Against the Machine. Nov. 1: The bombshell singer **Gwen Stefani,** on leave from her band, No Doubt.

**MAXWELL'S**

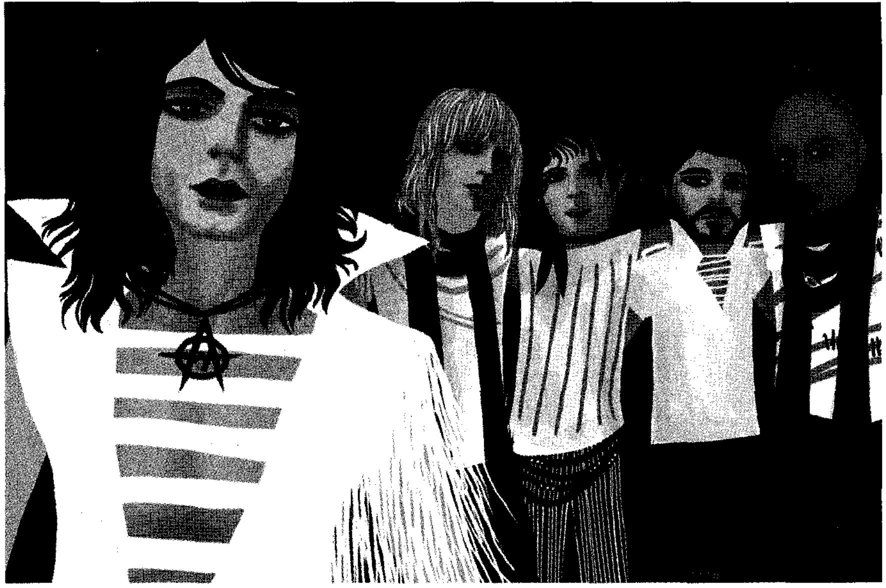
1039 Washington St., Hoboken (201-653-1703)—Oct. 26: In the early eighties, the underground iconoclast **Calvin Johnson** and his band Beat Happening defied prevailing punk-rock mores by replacing macho guitar crunch with simple arrangements and a willfully naïve aesthetic. This paved the way for countless cardigan-swaddled musicians, whom Johnson further encouraged with his staunchly independent label, K Records. When he's not busy "exploding the teenage underground into passionate revolt against the corporate ogre" (the K Records slogan), Johnson hits the small stages on the indie-rock circuit. With **Old Time Relijun.** Oct. 27: **Glenn Tilbrook,** of Squeeze.

**MERCURY LOUNGE**

217 E. Houston St. (212-260-4700)—Oct. 27: The brainy country act **Freakwater.** Oct. 31: The over-the-top Swedish band the **Ark** combines the spandex-wrapped sexuality of glam rock with the heart-racing, hip-shaking sound of seventies radio. One part Kiss, one part Queen, and one part Yaz, it's arena rock that's not likely to ever see its natural setting but will certainly put more than a few bodies in motion.

**MO PITKIN'S HOUSE OF SATISFACTION**

34 Avenue A, between 2nd and 3rd Sts. (212-777-5660)—Oct. 28-29 and Nov. 11-12: The Nashville native **Laura Cantrell,** New York's resident country-music ambassador.



*The Swedish band the Ark brings its arena-rock sound to the Mercury Lounge.*

DIVYA SRINIVASAN

**NOKIA THEATRE TIMES SQUARE**

Broadway at 44th St. (212-307-7171)—Oct. 26: Zakk Wylde, a tough-talking guitar player from New Jersey who made his name playing for Ozzy Osbourne, leads his own metal band, **Black Label Society.** Oct. 30-Nov. 1: **Slipknot,** the heavy-metal collective known for wearing masks and spewing violent lyrics, gives a set of Halloween shows and tries to turn the attention away from its recent legal tussle with Burger King. The fast-food chain started using a similar-looking ensemble in an advertising campaign, the band shot off a cease-and-desist letter, and Burger King sued in federal court.

**ST. ANN'S WAREHOUSE**

38 Water St., Brooklyn (718-254-8779)—Oct. 31: The **Tiger Lillies,** a wonderful, sordid trio of accordion, bass, and drums.

**S.O.B.'S**

204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (212-243-4940)—The successful marketing company **Giant Step** started out as a hip downtown party that mixed live jazz with d.j. stylings. On Oct. 30, in celebration of its fifteenth anniversary, it returns to its roots with an appearance by the original crew: DJ Jazzy Nice, the percussionist Nappy G, the flutist Richard Worth, the drummer Genji Siraisi, and the keyboardist Itaal Shur.

**WORLD MUSIC INSTITUTE**

The "Masters of Indian Music" concert on Oct. 28 at Symphony Space (Broadway at 95th St.) features the violin duo **Ganesh** and **Kumaresh,** who will be joined by the tabla player **Zakir Hussain** and other percussionists. ♦ A night of propulsive Bulgarian wedding music with the clarinettist **Ivo Papasov,** the saxophonist **Yuri Yunakov,** and the accordionist **Neshko Neshev.** (Symphony Space. Oct. 29. For more information about both shows, call 212-545-7536.)

**ZANKEL HALL**

Carnegie Hall, 57th St. at Seventh Ave. (212-247-7800)—Oct. 27: **Suzanne Vega** is the first act in "City Folk Live at Zankel," a new concert series featuring contemporary singer-songwriters.

## JAZZ AND STANDARDS

**BIRDLAND**

315 W. 44th St. (212-581-3080)—Oct. 26-29: **Nicholas Payton,** a trumpeter with full command of the mainstream-jazz tradition and points beyond, stops by with a quartet.

**BLUE NOTE**

131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (212-475-8592)—Oct. 25-28: **Milton Nascimento,** one of Brazil's musical treasures, has a voice like liquid silver and a preternatural gift for songcraft. Oct. 29-30: **Virginia Rodrigues,** a former manicurist and wedding singer from Salvador who was discovered a few years back by the Brazilian composer and singer Caetano Veloso.

**"BRILLIANT MISTAKE"**

**Elvis Costello,** known for crossing musical genres with abandon, is the subject of this benefit concert by Broadway stars. Costello will join **Adam Pascal, Daphne Rubin-Vega, Audra McDonald, Molly Ringwald,** and others as they bring Forty-second Street-style lustre to his songs. (Gerald L. Lynch Theatre, John Jay College, Tenth Ave. at 58th St. 800-996-5443. Oct. 31.)

**CARLYLE HOTEL**

Madison Ave. at 76th St. (212-744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, wraparound murals, and, through Oct. 29, the Broadway veteran **Elaine Stritch.**

**DIZZY'S CLUB COCA-COLA**

Broadway at 60th St. (212-258-9595)—Oct. 25-30: The pianist and composer **Randy Weston's African Rhythms** band combines the rhythmic diversity of the African diaspora with the lyrical smarts of New York bebop. Weston's percussive energy can be bracing—this is world music that never devalues its sources.

**IRIDIUM**

1650 Broadway, at 51st St. (212-582-2121)—Oct. 26-30: **Kenny Garrett,** a prodigiously gifted saxophonist, is one of the few first-rate players to arise from Miles Davis's final period as a bandleader. Mondays belong to the electric-guitar innovator **Les Paul.** The **Mingus Big Band** takes over on Tuesdays.

**JAZZ GALLERY**

290 Hudson St., near Spring St. (212-242-1063)—Oct. 27-29: A contemporary gadfly who backs up

the talk with the walk, the saxophonist **Steve Coleman** appears with his protean Five Elements band.

**JAZZ STANDARD**
116 E. 27th St. (212-576-2232)—Oct. 27-30: The influential electric bassist **Steve Swallow,** who writes intriguing, often downright catchy, tunes, joins the sextet of the saxophonist **Ohad Talmor.**

**SWEET RHYTHM**
88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (212-255-3626)—The saxophonist and flutist **Sonny Fortune** (here Oct. 28-29) is enjoying a commanding second act. Hard bop and free bop commingle in his now classic style.

**VILLAGE VANGUARD**
178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (212-255-4037)—Oct. 25-30: The trumpeter **Tom Harrell** fronts a quintet featuring his longtime saxophonist, **Jimmy Greene.** The **Vanguard Jazz Orchestra** holds sway on Mondays.

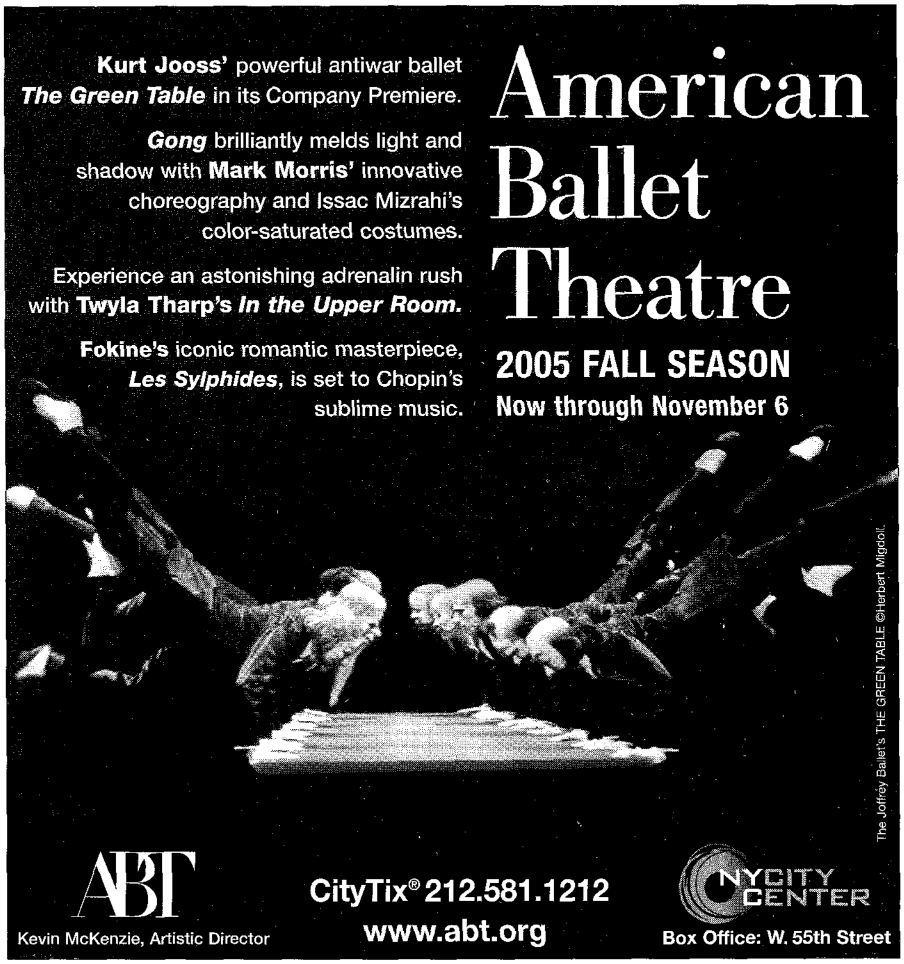
## ART

## MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

**METROPOLITAN MUSEUM**
Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. (212-535-7710)—Fall's most anticipated show, the retrospective **"Fra Angelico,"** opens on Oct. 29. ♦ **"Vincent van Gogh: The Drawings."** Through Dec. 31. ♦ **"Santiago Calatrava: Sculpture Into Architecture."** Through March 5. ♦ The city built by Holy Roman Emperor Charles IV as "the dream of delirious architects" to rival Paris and Rome lends treasures from its heyday in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. **"Prague: The Crown of Bohemia, 1347-1437"** is populated with many apple-cheeked Madonnas, who share gallery space with illuminated books, brocaded tapestries, amethyst vessels, rock-crystal reliquaries, and stone statuary from Karlstejn Castle and St. Vitus Cathedral. Through Jan. 3. ♦ The pre-Photoshop images in **"The Perfect Medium: Photography and the Occult"** purportedly depicted ghosts, spirit writing, ectoplasm, and the like. Through Dec. 31. ♦ **"Sol LeWitt on the Roof: Splotches, Whirls, and Twirls."** An installation in the roof garden, featuring five spiky stalagmite sculptures and a wall drawing. Through Oct. 30. ♦ The centerpiece of **"The Art of Medicine in Ancient Egypt"** is a fifteen-foot papyrus (ca. 1650-1550 B.C.), on loan from the New York Academy of Medicine, explaining the diagnosis and treatment of wounds to the head, neck, and shoulders by means both scientific and magical. Ointment jars, statues of healing gods, implements, and mummies are also on view. Through Jan. 15. ♦ The Costume Institute presents **"Rara Avis: Selections from the Iris Barrel Apfel Collection."** Through Jan. 22. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:30, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 9.)

**MUSEUM OF MODERN ART**
11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9400)—The retrospective exhibition **"Elizabeth Murray"** includes many of the shaped and splintered canvases covered with energizing color combinations for which the artist is best known. In the second-floor galleries, a selection of Murray's prints adapt similar techniques to paper. Through Jan. 9. ♦ **"Stillness: Michael Snow/Sam Taylor Wood,"** a small show of intimately scaled photographs and video works. Through Nov. 28. ♦ **"The High Line"** details Field Operations and Diller Scofidio & Renfro's ambitious urban rails-to-trails scheme for the abandoned elevated tracks that run along the West Side from Gansevoort Street to Thirty-fourth Street. Through Oct. 31. ♦ **"SAFE: Design Takes on Risk."** Through Jan. 2. (Open Wednesdays through Mondays, 10:30 to 5:30, and Friday evenings until 8.)

**GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM**
Fifth Ave. at 89th St. (212-423-3500)—The sprawling exhibition **"Russia!"** includes most everything you might think could fit under that rubric: gilt religious icons dating from the Middle Ages, Renaissance-era Western European paintings from imperial collections, romanticized portraits of peasant life, socialist-realist propaganda, early modernist masterworks from the collections of industrialists, videos made just this year. Many of the items have not left Russia in centuries,


**Kurt Jooss'** powerful antiwar ballet ***The Green Table*** in its Company Premiere.

***Gong*** brilliantly melds light and shadow with **Mark Morris'** innovative choreography and Issac Mizrahi's color-saturated costumes.

Experience an astonishing adrenalin rush with **Twyla Tharp's *In the Upper Room.***

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The Joffrey Ballet's THE GREEN TABLE ©Herbert Migdoll.

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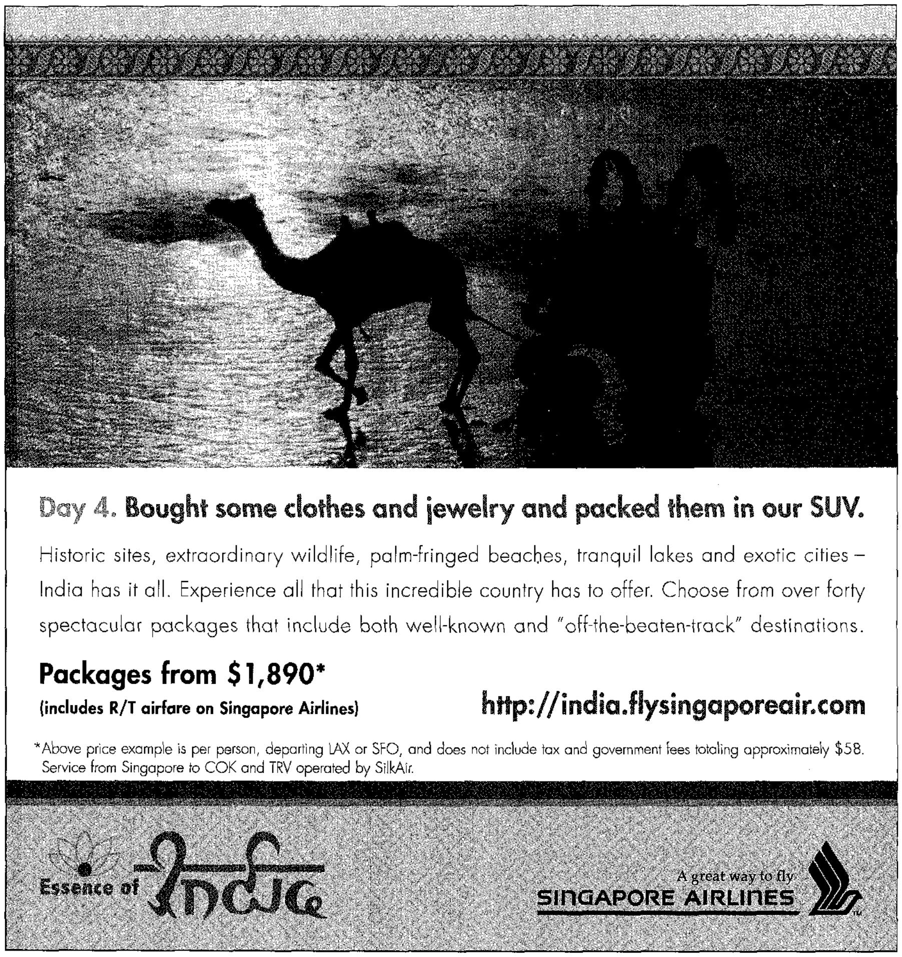
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or even ever; pieces like Malevich's "Black Square" (which usually lives at the Hermitage), Vasily Perov's portrait of Dostoyevsky (the only one painted in the writer's lifetime), and a fifteenth-century icon made by Andrei Rublev will be entirely new to most American eyes. Through Jan. 11. (Open Saturdays through Wednesdays, 10 to 5:45, and Fridays, 10 to 8.)

**WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART**

Madison Ave. at 75th St. (800-944-8639)—There's a strange fissure in the paintings in **"Oscar Bluemner: A Passion for Color,"** which display all the signs of European modernism. They remind one of Braque's views of l'Estaque or Derain's bright European vistas but instead make reference to the American Northeast with titles like "Approach of Night (Hoboken)" or "Form and Light, Motif in West New Jersey (Beattiestown)." Bluemner (1867-1938), who emigrated from Germany in 1892, brought his Old World influences with him, along with an architect's training and eye—updated later by the lessons of the Fauves, Die Brücke, and artists like Franz Marc. Paintings of buildings and landscapes are broken into bright structural shards, like segments of stained glass. Secular religiosity reaches even greater heights in a room full of watercolors depicting moons and sunsets. Lit to look incandescent, they're arranged like a chapel devoted to painting and meditation. Through Feb. 12. ♦ Drawings and a new animation piece are on view in **"Raymond Pettibon."** Through Feb. 19. ♦ **"Building and Breaking the Grid, 1962-2002."** Through Jan. 8. ♦ A small selection of paintings from the permanent collection, **"Still Life: A Vital Theme"** is tucked away in a side gallery on the fifth floor of the museum. The images of flowers on tables are mostly forgettable, but Edward Hopper's broody brown study of his own bedroom at home in Nyack surprises, with a portrait within the painting complicating the memento-mori idea of the *vanitas*. Through Jan. 15. ♦ **"The New City: Sub/Urbia in Recent Photography."** Through Jan. 15. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and weekends, 11 to 6, and Fridays, 1 to 9.)

**COOPER-HEWITT NATIONAL DESIGN MUSEUM**

Fifth Ave. at 91st St. (212-849-8300)—**"Extreme Textiles: Designing for High Performance."** Through Oct. 30. ♦ For an institution with a large, and mostly unseen, collection, the artist-as-curator offers a surefire exhibition strategy. It works charmingly in **"Yinka Shonibare Selects,"** with the Nigerian-British artist plundering the Cooper-Hewitt's storerooms to mount a small, expansive show examining fantasies of transportation, enclosure, and release. From tiny bamboo cricket cages and a gentleman's portable dressing case in rosewood to the European travel diaries of the museum's founders, the adventurous Hewitt sisters, Shonibare assembles a double portrait of the institution and himself. An affectionate coup de grâce is his homage to Sarah and Eleanor Hewitt, their proper Victorian dresses rendered in the artist's signature African prints, their headless bodies balanced on six-foot stilts. Through May 7. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, 10 to 5, Fridays, 10 to 9, Saturdays, 10 to 6, and Sundays, noon to 6.)

**FRICK COLLECTION**

1 E. 70th St. (212-288-0700)—Some one hundred paintings by the Netherlandish artist Hans Memling (ca. 1435-94) survive; of the thirty portraits, twenty are at the Frick for the exhibition **"Memling's Portraits."** Through Dec. 31. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6, and Sundays, 11 to 5.)

**GROLIER CLUB**

47 E. 60th St. (212-838-6690)—**"No Other Appetite: Sylvia Plath, Ted Hughes, and the Blood Jet of Poetry"** presents the couple's manuscripts, letters, photographs, and more. Through Nov. 19. (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5.)

**JAPAN SOCIETY**

333 E. 47th St. (212-752-3015)—Hiroshi Sugimoto's **"History of History,"** a show that juxtaposes his photographs with fossils, scrolls, masks, and other ancient Asian art and artifacts from his own collection, is a minimalist tour de force that flirts with surrealist provocation. The artist's rigorously abstracted black-and-white seascapes set a tone of cool reserve that's tweaked by the witty use of fifties medical equipment to house or hold certain objects: eight tiny fetus-shaped beads in a sterilizer, a carved stone rod resting on a hospital gurney and titled "Testament of a Penis." Other

photographs (including shots of natural-history dioramas and wax-museum figures) recede so that artifacts might command the walls, but individual pieces are less important here than the sublime sensibility that connects them. Through Feb. 19. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 11 to 6, and weekends, 11 to 5.)

**NEUE GALERIE**
1048 Fifth Ave., at 86th St. (212-628-6200)— **"Egon Schiele,"** an exhibition of a hundred and fifty paintings and drawings by the Austrian artist, who died in 1918, at the age of twenty-eight. Through Feb. 20. (Open Fridays, 11 to 9, and Saturdays through Mondays, 11 to 6.)

**NEW MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART**
Temporarily located in the Chelsea Art Museum, 556 W. 22nd St. (212-219-1222)—**Brian Jungen's** sculptures sound like Surrealist homework: use Nike sneakers, plastic chairs, and cafeteria trays to represent Pacific Northwest tribal masks, whale skeletons, and aboriginal prisoners in the Canadian penal system. But Jungen manages the transpositions with satirical grace. The full-size skeletons hanging from the ceiling look ready for the Museum of Natural History, except that their bones are made of molded white patio furniture, just as the bird-headed totems look weirdly authentic, in spite of Air Jordan logos stamped on their leather plumage. The plastic trays make a low-budget minimalist cube, the distribution of their different colors registering the durations of the prisoners' sentences. Through Dec. 31. ♦ The seventh annual showing of new acquisitions in the **Altoids Curiously Strong Collection** isn't stellar by comparison with previous selections. Still, as a pocket-size survey of work by young artists from around the U.S., the exhibition is quietly exhilarating. Best is Yuken Teruya's delicate leafy tree, cut out of but not detached from the McDonald's bag that becomes its proscenium. Honorable mention goes to Rob Fischer's overpainted photo, which envelops a derelict mobile home in flames, and Juan Miguel Ramos's comically absorbing double-screen video, a partially animated meditation on multiculturalism. Through Oct. 29. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, noon to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

## GALLERIES—UPTOWN

*Galleries are usually open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6; please call the gallery for exact hours.*

**BARKLEY HENDRICKS**
Hendricks's paintings and photographs look like the work of a revivalist steeped in seventies nostalgia and obsessed with period authenticity, but they're actually the genuine article: created between 1972 and 1983, they move between the worlds of music and style and fashion. Portraits of young black men and women decked out in the accoutrements of the late soul and early hip-hop eras carry titles like "Superduperman" and "Sweet Backs." The paintings in particular predict the work of younger artists like Kehinde Wiley. They also raise the question of whether Hendricks's post-1983 work will need another decade to gestate—and to generate the same interest. Through Nov. 5. (Projectile, 37 W. 57th St. 212-688-1585.)

**CAMERON MARTIN**
Landscape is transformed into ghostly fragments—mountain peaks, lone trees, quiet pools of water—rendered in flat shards reminiscent of paint-by-numbers schematics. Although the works are on paper, they don't feel subordinate to full-scale paintings. Here is a repository of images for a new version of the sublime: a natural world shrinking before our eyes like a melting ice cap, or one that could rear up with unexpected fury. Nineteenth-century landscape and Western survey photography are invoked, and the East is conjured as well. Tree branches cut across compositions as in Japanese ukiyo-e prints, and the overarching stillness of the works mimics the controlled gesture of haiku. Through Nov. 12. (Greenberg Van Doren, 730 Fifth Ave. 212-445-0444.)

**IRVING PENN**
The flip side of Penn's rigorous elegance is an unexpectedly earthy taste for grunge and decay: cig-

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*Recent photographs by Lise Sarfati, including "Sloane #34, Oakland, CA" (2003, above), are at Milo in Chelsea through Nov. 26.*

arette butts, gutter debris, animal bones, human skulls. In "Underfoot," his subject is primarily chewing gum, photographed on the sidewalk where he found it, caked and embedded with hair, soot, and stray bits of urban grit. The resulting black-and-white images have been subtly toned—they have a warm, alluring glow—but they remain rude and exhilaratingly abrasive. Scaled to fit alongside small paintings, they look like found Dubuffets: arty ruffians who might track mud on the carpet but wouldn't be uncomfortable in the drawing room. Through Nov. 5. (Pace/MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 212-759-7999.)

**"PHOTOGRAPHING THE INVISIBLE"**

"The Perfect Medium," the exhibition of photographs of occult phenomena now at the Metropolitan Museum, opens with but quickly moves away from classic spirit photographs—studio portraits purporting to capture the ghostly images of the dead hovering alongside the living. This excellent show of spirit photos from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries adds valuable details to the Met's history but is utterly engaging (and unintentionally hilarious) on its own. Sitters anxious to reconnect with the dearly departed are here rewarded with vaguely recognizable wraiths, cloudlike apparitions, bursts of light, or showers of sparks—all manifestations of their own faith in the hereafter. Through Nov. 15. (De Lellis, 47 E. 68th St. 212-327-1482.)

## GALLERIES—CHELSEA

**JEREMY BLAKE**

Blake's film "Sodium Fox" takes its script from the neon pastiche poems of David Berman, with whom he shares an aesthetic of melancholic glam. An expertly crafted psychedelic overload, the film flirts dangerously with MTV-ish self-obsession. But every time he approaches that precipice, Blake pulls back, frees his noir and candy pop from irony, and risks something like sincere reverie. A series of paintings and collages round out the show; one imagines that they must be studies for the film, though they could just as easily be postproduction tie-ins. Here, again, though, Blake's unerring compositional sense saves the whole endeavor from itself. Through Nov. 12. (Feigen, 535 W. 20th St. 212-929-0500.)

**EMILIE CLARK**

Clark's gorgeous paintings and watercolors emerge from a conceptual dialogue with the naturalist Mary Treat (1830-1923), a correspondent of Darwin's who—from her home in Vineland, New Jersey—pioneered the study of carnivorous plants. Clark's show is titled "Home Studies in Nature," after Treat's book, and the forms of the paintings are anchored in exact observation; Clark raised terrariumsful of her subjects and lived with them in her studio before transferring them, along with the paintings, into the gallery. Categorized as "portraits" and "history paintings" as well as still-lifes, the work examines codes and systems of knowledge and representation without stinting on visually seductive color and form. Through Nov. 12. (Steinberg, 526 W. 26th St. 212-924-5770.)

**GARDAR EIDE EINARSSON**

Einarsson is a fitting addition to Team's stable of angry young men, a posse that includes Slater Bradley and Banks Violette. The Norwegian's brand of youthful angst and rage (the show's title is "Leashed or Confined") has a distinctly revolutionary flavor. May, 1968, is conjured with flags whose "Liberty" slogans are partially burned away. A simple white text on black canvas propped against the wall warns "Nous sommes prêts pour combattre la rébellion," while "Wallpainting (Sic Semper Tyrannis)" takes the Latin phrase attributed to Brutus at the assassination of Julius Caesar (and shouted, supposedly, by John Wilkes Booth after shooting Abraham Lincoln) and renders it as the logo for the seminal California punk-rock record label SST. Through Nov. 5. (Team, 527 W. 26th St. 212-279-9219.)

**SHIRIN NESHAT**

Two new video installations by the Iranian artist and filmmaker, part of a series based on Shahrnush Parsipur's novel "Women Without Men." Through Nov. 12. (Gladstone, 515 W. 24th St. 212-206-9300.)

**SUSAN PAULSEN**

Paulsen's small, quiet photographs of what appears to be a comfortable, if not conspicuously privileged, life are refreshingly out of synch with the times. No one makes pictures of their pets, farm animals, handsome children, ripe produce, or folded linens anymore—not outside of the pages of *Martha Stewart Living*, at least. But Paulsen, who doesn't take the good life for granted, records its details with unabashed but finely measured delight. Because she's not worried about making masterpieces, she relaxes and frames simple pleasures with an alert, grateful eye. Through Oct. 29. (Bell, 511 W. 25th St. 212-691-3883.)

**LISA SANDITZ**

Sanditz's densely painted studies of ominous orange sunsets, lonely bungalows hunched in cold arroyos, and antlike R.V.s toiling through stridently striped canyons suggest a road trip through a dystopian America. Sanditz handles her acrylic in a loose but fastidious manner that mostly justifies her giddy yet scary palette, and the images' picture-puzzle feel clashes well with their post-nuclear attitude. Such juxtapositions are not, however, new, and the news they bring—that there's something toxic out there—doesn't exactly shock. Through Oct. 29. (CRG, 535 W. 22nd St. 212-229-2766.)

**YINKA SHONIBARE**

Dressing anonymous Victorians in African cloth is a clever idea, redolent of commodity exchange and cultural appropriation. Thus Shonibare continues to pursue it, despite the risk of idea fatigue. A nice new twist is the suggestion of motion in his tableaux—one mannequin in an apparently wind-blown, wildly colorful frock coat is posed after an eighteenth-century Raeburn painting, while a family group of three rides unicycles. The mobility idea (echoed in the show Shonibare has assembled at the Cooper-Hewitt) founders, however, in a series of heavy, unlovely abstract paintings to which are attached toy cars, birds, helicopters, etc. Through Oct. 29. (James Cohan, 533 W. 26th St. 212-714-9500.)

**LUC TUYMANS**
The Belgian artist examines and critiques American political actions in ten new paintings. Through Nov. 19. (Zwirner, 525 W. 19th St. 212-727-2070.)

**"TWIXT TWO WORLDS, OR THE UNINVITED GUEST: A MAGICIAN AT THE SÉANCE"**
Coincident with the Met's "Perfect Medium" show, the scholar and magician Ricky Jay presents a selection of related items from his vast collection of broadsides, posters, books, photographs, and ephemera pertaining to spiritualist amusements and deceptions. Slides from a presentation that Harry Houdini made in 1924 (though he desperately wanted to believe in mediums, he always figured out their tricks) demonstrate a few methods for spirit writing, materializations, and the like; this is accompanied by a recording of Houdini himself and a reading of his debunking lecture and commentary by the silver-tongued Jay. Through Dec. 10. (Burgin, 243 W. 18th St. 212-462-2668.)

## *Short List*

**CANDICE BREITZ:** Sonnabend, 536 W. 22nd St. 212-627-1018. Through Oct. 29. **EDUARDO DEL VALLE AND MIRTA GOMEZ:** Kempner, 501 W. 23rd St. 212-206-6872. Through Oct. 29. **TOM FRIEDMAN:** Feature Inc., 530 W. 25th St. 212-675-7772. Through Oct. 29. **ANDRÉ KERTÉSZ:** Silverstein, 535 W. 24th St. 212-627-3930. Through Nov. 12. **DANIEL LIBESKIND:** Protetch, 511 W. 22nd St. 212-633-6999. Through Nov. 5. **ED RUSCHA:** Richardson, 535 W. 22nd St. 646-230-9610. Through Nov. 5. **LISE SARFATI:** Milo, 525 W. 25th St. 212-414-0370. Through Nov. 26.

## DANCE

**AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE**
This week, the 1986 Twyla Tharp classic "In the Upper Room" returns to the A.B.T. repertory after a ten-year absence. The faithful staging (by the longtime Tharp dancer and former A.B.T. principal Keith Roberts) retains all the original elements: Jennifer Tipton's lighting design, Norma Kamali's zebra-striped costumes, the fog machines, the red toe shoes, and the white Reeboks. When the dancers materialize out of the fog, leaping and turning to Philip Glass's pulsating score, they have the feel of particles moving through space. Their energy belies the punishing difficulty of Tharp's sequences, which fuse ballet with sources as diverse as yoga and jogging without ever breaking the trancelike state. This week's other new entry, a revival of Antony Tudor's ballet "Dark Elegies" (1937), about a village mourning the loss of its children, is set to Mahler lieder and performed in the costumes worn at the 1940 A.B.T. première. ♦ Oct. 25 at 7:30: "Apollo" (with Jose Manuel Carreño, Julie Kent, Stella Abrera, and Irina Dvorovenko), "Gong," and "The Green Table" (David Hallberg). ♦ Oct. 26 at 7:30: "Dark Elegies" (Michele Wiles, Kent, Grant DeLong, Sascha Radetsky, Adrienne Schulte, and Jesus Pastor), "Kaleidoscope" (Sarah Lane, Herman Cornejo, Veronika Part, and Maxim Beloserkovsky), and "In the Upper Room." ♦ Oct. 27 at 7:30: "Apollo," "Le Corsaire Pas de Deux" (Xiomara Reyes and Angel Corella), "Paquita Pas de Deux," and "Rodeo" (with Erica Cornejo in the leading role). ♦ Oct. 28 at 8: "Les Sylphides," "Dark Elegies," and "In the Upper Room." ♦ Oct. 29 at 2: "Kaleidoscope" (Gillian Murphy, Ethan Stiefel, Kent, and Hallberg), "Gong," and "The Green Table" (with Isaac Stappas as Death). ♦ Oct. 29 at 8: "Les Sylphides," "Afternoon of a Faun" (Abrera and Hallberg), "In the Upper Room," and "Le Corsaire Pas de Deux" (Paloma Herrera and Corella). ♦ Oct. 30 at 2: "Les Sylphides," "Dark Elegies" (with a new cast), and "The Green Table" (with Stappas). ♦ Nov. 1 at 7:30: "Kaleidoscope" (with a new cast), "Dark Elegies," and "In the Upper Room." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 212-581-1212. Through Nov. 6.)

**GRUPO CORPO**
This Brazilian contemporary-dance troupe makes defying categorization its raison d'être. "Lecuona," a collection of duets in a Latin exhibition-ballroom mode, is, typically, unlike anything else in the company's repertory. Moving to sentimental love songs by the Cuban composer Ernesto Lecuona, the expert dancers avidly embrace each other—and the conventions of the genre—twisting them in quirky, inventive ways. "Onqotô" treats a Brazilian expression normally used to ridicule a local accent as a metaphysical question. With a driving original score by Caetano Veloso and José Miguel Wisnik. (BAM's Howard Gilman Opera House, 30 Lafayette Ave. 718-636-4100. Oct. 25 at 7 and Oct. 27-29 at 7:30.)

**PARSONS DANCE COMPANY**
The popular company's Joyce season continues, with two alternating programs stocked with repertory favorites (like the strobe-lit solo "Caught") and a pair of New York premières. (175 Eighth Ave. 212-242-0800. Oct. 25-28 at 8, Oct. 29 at 2 and 8, and Oct. 30 at 2 and 7:30.)

**JODI MELNICK AND SCOTT HERON**
Two theatrical performers share a high-contrast double bill. Melnick's captivating "Wanderlust, Kentucky" is a stream-of-consciousness piece in which narrative fragments surface in suggestive poses, and even gymnastic feats are given psychological coloring. At various points in Heron's "Flossing and Other Dances," he wears wigs, dresses, a giant dental-floss box, and, in the crotch of his tights, a doll; when he thrusts his pelvis, the doll squeaks. Heron's jokes are like that—absurd, unexpected, unsettling, a little sad. The songs, composed and sung by Corey Dargel, sound like Morrissey done tongue half in cheek. (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 212-924-0077. Oct. 26-29 at 7:30.)

**"CATHAY: THREE TALES OF CHINA"**
The latest interdisciplinary creation from the Obie and Bessie winner Ping Chong is filled with cinematic, dreamlike images—a rod puppet swirling the long sleeves of its Chinese robe, a thin shadow puppet trudging across a field while digitally animated bombers zoom over its head. The superb puppets (constructed and operated by China's Shaanxi Folk Art Theatre and Seattle's Carter Family Marionettes) produce cunningly human body language, taking on different attitudes in each of the play's three settings (the Tang-dynasty period, the Second World War, and present-day China). The mesmerizing visuals get the stories across poignantly, despite the script's Disney-style humor and overly broad characterizations. (New Victory Theatre, 209 W. 42nd St. 212-239-6200. Oct. 28 at 7, Oct. 29 at 2 and 7, and Oct. 30 at noon and 5. Through Nov. 13.)

**"JAZZ IN MOTION: TAPPIN' INTO MONK"**
In the middle of a song, Thelonious Monk would often rise from the piano and wander into a distracted shuffle. While Savion Glover's ferocious foot percussion bears little outward resemblance to that curious dance, it's propelled by the same impulse. How far that affinity goes will be seen when the ubiquitous tap dancer teams up with the pianist Cyrus Chestnut, the drummer Herlin Riley, and the saxophonist Ted Nash to test his extraordinary rhythmic sense against the late composer's jolting accents. (Rose Theatre, Broadway at 60th St. 212-721-6500. Oct. 28-29 at 8. The show will also be featured in the "Jazz for Young People" series on Oct. 28 at noon and 2.)

**"CSÁRDÁS: THE TANGO OF THE EAST"**
Members of Zoltán Zsuráfszki's Budapest Ensemble kick up their heels in this Hungarian-style hoedown while onstage musicians play plaintive old folk tunes on cimbalom and other traditional instruments. The boisterous male dancers get the showy roles, slapping their knees and thighs in syncopation with their stamping feet. When they swing their fleet-footed partners, the ladies twirl at terrific speeds. The show, which is hung loosely on the tale of an abducted bride, is an updated version of the company's touring production from 2000. (Lehman Center for the Performing Arts, 250 Bedford Park Blvd. W., the Bronx. 718-960-8833. Oct. 30 at 3.)

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## TABLES FOR TWO
## CHUBO

6 Clinton St. (212-674-6300)—First things first: the name of the place is pronounced "Chew-bo," not, as a patron was recently heard bellowing into his cell phone to let a friend know where he was, "Chubbo." Opened by Claude Chassagne in 2003, it has a menu that's a little United Nations. A *very* little United Nations: not including daily and monthly specials, there are only five entrées and six appetizers (three hot, three cold) to choose from. (This being America, land of chubbos, there are five desserts.)

The name of the restaurant is Japanese for "professional kitchen," a translation that doesn't exactly hit your ear like poetry and doesn't create any expectations of culinary inspiration. Actually, almost everything on the menu sounds like a welcome surprise, and yet, upon arrival, disappoints. One thinks of fusion as a way to lighten the step of old-guard cuisine, but here the effect is a piling up of ingredients that, in many cases, don't belong together. The yam coating on the sautéed striped bass, served with an apple-cider reduction and a celery-root purée, is more like a crunchy shell, overwhelming the fish underneath. An asparagus risotto is gummy and accompanied by a cloying slab of spinach lasagna. You leave feeling full but deflated, and possibly a little tense from worrying about knocking things over; the tables are small and made more so by the large wine and water glasses. Sharing requires you to snake your fork over to your partner's plate with the care of a bomb defuser.

The appetizers tend to be more appealing. (And before the appetizers there is a wonderfully garlicky crème-fraîche spread, spiked with chipotle and spinach, for dipping crostini into.) Four disk-shaped dumplings filled with braised pork cheek, sitting in a little puddle of butternut-squash purée, are light and sweet, and two tiny slices of pickled radish on top of each add a piquant touch. The pistachio-crusted oysters, held together with a band of seaweed, are a delight; it's as if four frumpy fried clams were transformed by the magic wand of a fairy godmother. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays for dinner. Entrées $17-$22.)

*—Nancy Franklin*

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## CLASSICAL MUSIC
## OPERA

**METROPOLITAN OPERA**
Oct. 26 at 8: **"Aida,"** featuring Michèle Crider in the title role, along with Dolora Zajick, Salvatore Licitra, Lado Antaneli, and Paata Burchuladze; James Conlon conducts. ♦ Oct. 29 at 8: With Hasmik Papian and Mark Rucker replacing Crider and Antaneli. ♦ Oct. 27 and Oct. 31 at 8: Nicolas Joël's plush production of **"Lucia di Lammermoor,"** from 1998, features the glimmering soprano Elizabeth Futral in the title role, along with Giuseppe Filianoti (in his début, as Edgardo), Charles Taylor, and the reliable basso John Relyea; Edoardo Müller, an old hand in

## CRITIC'S NOTEBOOK
## STAGING AREA

Among the more disappointing aspects of today's theatre—both on and off Broadway—are the ways in which producers and directors borrow from television and film, and how little they borrow from other popular theatrical forms. Our generally moribund theatre needs enlivening. To do so, why not look to rock concerts, opera, and cabaret for inspiration? On her current tour, Tracy Chapman, with minimal stage effects, projects a Masha-like sobriety and wit in a distinctly Chekhovian manner—she articulates the pain of the world without making a fuss. Or there's Karen O's Clytemnestra-like standoff against the audience whenever she takes the stage with her band, the Yeah Yeah Yeahs. Cabaret shows, such as the one at the Starlight Bar and Lounge, offer a number of eclectic stage personas. In a more standard venue, we have Kristine Jepson's fierce turn as Robert Oppenheimer's wife in the opera "Doctor Atomic." If traditional theatre could incorporate inventive talents like these, it would be on its way toward becoming a more satisfying spectacle.

—*Hilton Als*

EDEL RODRIGUEZ

the bel-canto repertory, conducts. ♦ Oct. 28 at 8: Cesare Lievi's bouncy production of Rossini's **"La Cenerentola"** has the innocent charm of vintage Saturday-morning cartoons. The final performance features the wondrous Olga Borodina—whose Rossini is as formidable as her Mussorgsky—in the title role and Kenneth Tarver as Don Ramiro; Antonello Allemandi. ♦ Oct. 29 at 1:30 and Nov. 1 at 8: The house is loading a promising cast into its latest revival of **"Così Fan Tutte,"** the most astringent and complex of Mozart's operas; it includes Barbara Frittoli, Magdalena Kožená, Matthew Polenzani, Mariusz Kwiecien, and the redoubtable Thomas Allen; James Levine. (Metropolitan Opera House. 212-362-6000.)

**NEW YORK CITY OPERA**

Oct. 26 at 7:30 and Oct. 29 at 8: City Opera's production of **"Tosca,"** set in the Fascist Italy of the nineteen-thirties, returns with Carla Thelen Hanson (a vital young soprano, in the title role), Jorge Antonio Pita, and Todd Thomas; John DeMain conducts. (These are the final performances.) ♦ Oct. 27 at 7:30: Richard Rodney Bennett's **"The Mines of Sulphur,"** an opera noir set in Restoration England, features Caroline Worra, Jessie Raven, and Mark Duffin in its New York première run; George Manahan. ♦ Oct. 28 at 8 and Oct. 30 at 1:30: **"Il Barbiere di Siviglia,"** with Jennifer Rivera, Hugh Russell, John Tessier, and Nikolay Didenko; Joseph Rescigno. ♦ Oct. 29 at 1:30 and Nov. 1 at 7:30: Notable for its shrewd employment of simple, diaphanous curtains and attractive costumes, City Opera's production of **"Turandot"** manages to provide abundant spectacle without a lot of expensive clutter. Lori Phillips and Philip Webb, reprising their roles from the 2003 season, are Turandot and Calaf; Manahan. (New York State Theatre. 212-721-6500.)

## ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

**NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC**

In recent years, Itzhak Perlman has focussed much of his energy on teaching and on conducting, a task to which he brings the same affable lyricism that distinguishes his performances on the violin. Schubert's sunny Symphony No. 3 should suit him well; he also conducts Tchaikovsky's more ambitious Symphony No. 4 and performs two short works for violin and orchestra by Mozart (the Adagio, K. 261, and the Rondo, K. 373). (Oct. 26-27 at 7:30, Oct. 28 at 11 A.M., and Oct. 29 at 8.) ♦ In "Bringing Back the Music," the Philharmonic will play alongside the Louisiana Philharmonic Orchestra in a special benefit concert to aid the New Orleans-based ensemble. Guests include Perlman, the trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, the soprano Audra McDonald, and the singer-songwriter Randy Newman; Lorin Maazel, Leonard Slatkin, James Conlon, Ted Sperling, and Carlos Miguel Prieto conduct; Beverly Sills hosts. (Oct. 28 at 8.) (Avery Fisher Hall. 212-875-5656.)

**ORCHESTRA OF ST. LUKE'S**

If his recent recording is any guide, Donald Runnicles's account of Mozart's Requiem—in yet another new version, by the musicologist Robert Levin—will be a swift and athletic affair. The Atlanta Symphony Orchestra Chamber Chorus also sings the composer's "Ave Verum Corpus," while eight of the St. Luke's cellists perform Pärt's "Fratres," a powerful, voiceless utterance of contemporary spirituality. The excellent vocal soloists are Celena Shafer, Kristine Jepson, John Tessier, and Nathan Berg. (Carnegie Hall, 212-247-7800. Oct. 27 at 8.)

**MET CHAMBER ENSEMBLE**

James Levine conducts a program offering American modernist rigor (Wuorinen's "Dante Trilogy," and the New York première of Carter's songful "Dialogues," with the pianist Nicolas Hodges) and French whimsy (Milhaud's "Le Boeuf sur le Toit"). (Zankel Hall. 212-247-7800. Oct. 30 at 5.)

**ORPHEUS CHAMBER ORCHESTRA**

The Metropolitan Museum's Medieval Sculpture Hall will be an ideal setting for a new series of concerts of the Bach Cantatas, offered by the renowned conductorless ensemble. This program features the Cantatas Nos. 48, 78 ("Jesu, der du Meine Seele"), and 147; the soloists include the soprano Kathy Teil and the tenor Scott Murphree. (Fifth Ave. at 82nd St. 212-570-3949. Oct. 31 at 8.)

## RECITALS

**"MASTERS OF MODERN AMERICAN ART SONG"**

David Del Tredici and Tom Cipullo accompany performances of their own songs (including "Matthew Shepard," Del Tredici's lyric paean to the gay martyr); songs by David Eddleman are also featured on the program. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 212-864-5400. Oct. 27 at 8.)

**CARNEGIE HALL RECITALS**

Oct. 28 at 7:30: Offering a concert by three composers who have endured hearing problems would be a gimmick if the performers were below the calibre of the smart and polished Miró Quartet, which will play works by Beethoven, Smetana (the String Quartet No. 1, "From My Life"), and Brent Michael Davids (the new "Tinnitus Quartet"). (Weill Recital Hall.) ♦ Oct. 30 at 2: Vladimir Feltsman, that grand and stoic gentleman of the keyboard, performs two Beethoven sonatas (the "Pathétique" and the No. 31 in A-Flat Major) as well as Mussorgsky's "Pictures at an Exhibition." (Stern Auditorium.) ♦ Oct. 31 at 8: Ivan Moravec, a more poetic type of virtuoso at ease in the French and Czech repertories, offers music by Janáček ("In the Mists"), Debussy, and Chopin. (Stern Auditorium.) (212-247-7800.)

**CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER: SHOSTAKOVICH CENTENNIAL**

The pianist Anne-Marie McDermott is the star of a three-concert festival. Oct. 28 at 8: The rarely performed Piano Trio No. 1 begins a concert that finishes with the beloved Piano Quintet. ♦ Oct. 30 at 5: The elegant Cello Sonata, followed by three coruscating masterworks: the Piano Trio No. 2, the Two Pieces for String Octet, and the Concerto for Piano, Trumpet, and Strings (in a mini-orchestral performance). ♦ Nov. 1 at 7:30: Two late works of chilling resonance—the Seven Romances on Poems of Alexander Blok (with the soprano Lauren Skuce) and the Viola Sonata—highlight the final program. (Alice Tully Hall. 212-875-5788.)

**MILLER THEATRE: THE LIGETI ÉTUDES**

In the next installment of George Steel's mini-festival dedicated to the great Hungarian modernist, Christopher Taylor performs the complete piano Études, short works of bristling virtuosity that revel in the influences of Balinese gamelan pings, American minimalism, and contemporary jazz. (Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 212-854-7799. Oct. 29 at 8.)

**ARTEK: "GRAVEYARD MUSIC"**

The excellent early-music group, back from this year's Edinburgh Fringe festival, begins its season with the program it presented there—a performance of Monteverdi's doleful "Sestina" (as well as music by Dowland and Purcell) along with poetry recitations and a visual montage of images from the graveyard at Edinburgh's St. Cuthbert's Church (a favorite haunt for nineteenth-century grave robbers). (St. Michael's Church, 99th St. at Amsterdam Ave. 212-967-9157. Oct. 29 at 8.)

**ANDRÁS SCHIFF**

The pianist, who is bringing the same astonishing mixture of technical discipline and lyric freedom to Beethoven that he has to Schumann and Janáček, performs the Sonatas Nos. 16 and 21 ("Waldstein") along with three works by Haydn. (Avery Fisher Hall. 212-721-6500. Nov. 1 at 8.)

## MOVIES OPENING

**BALLETS RUSSES**

A documentary about the legendary ballet companies, directed by Daniel Geller and Dayna Goldfine. Opening Oct. 26. (Film Forum.)

**G**
Christopher Scott Cherot directed this drama based on "The Great Gatsby," in which a self-made hip-hop mogul living in the Hamptons pines for his married college sweetheart. Opening Oct. 28. (In wide release.)

**THE LEGEND OF ZORRO**
Martin Campbell directed this action sequel, with Antonio Banderas as Zorro and Catherine Zeta-Jones as his wife. Opening Oct. 28. (In wide release.)

**NEW YORK DOLL**
The glam-punk band the New York Dolls and its founder, Arthur (Killer) Kane, are the subjects of this documentary. Directed by Greg Whiteley. Opening Oct. 28. (Angelika Film Center.)

**PARADISE NOW**
Hany Abu-Assad directed this drama, about two Palestinian childhood friends who have been recruited as suicide bombers. In Arabic. Opening Oct. 28. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Sunshine Cinema.)

**THE PASSENGER**
A rerelease of Michelangelo Antonioni's 1975 drama, which stars Jack Nicholson as a dissatisfied journalist who steals the identity of a dead man and travels through Africa and Europe. With Maria Schneider. Opening Oct. 28. (Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Sunshine Cinema.)

**PRIME**
Ben Younger ("Boiler Room") directed this romantic comedy about a New York career woman (Uma Thurman), her therapist (Meryl Streep), and the young painter she falls in love with (Bryan Greenberg). Opening Oct. 28. (In wide release.)

**SAW II**
Donnie Wahlberg stars as Detective Eric Mason, who follows the trail of a notorious killer named Jigsaw, in a sequel to "Saw." Opening Oct. 28. (In wide release.)

**THREE . . . EXTREMES**
A triptych of horror shorts by Takashi Miike, Fruit Chan, and Park Chanwook. In Japanese, Cantonese, Mandarin, and Korean. Opening Oct. 28. (In wide release.)

**THE WEATHER MAN**
Gore Verbinski directed this comedy, about a Chicago weatherman (Nicolas Cage) who must decide whether to relocate his family to New York. With Michael Caine and Hope Davis. Opening Oct. 28. (In wide release.)

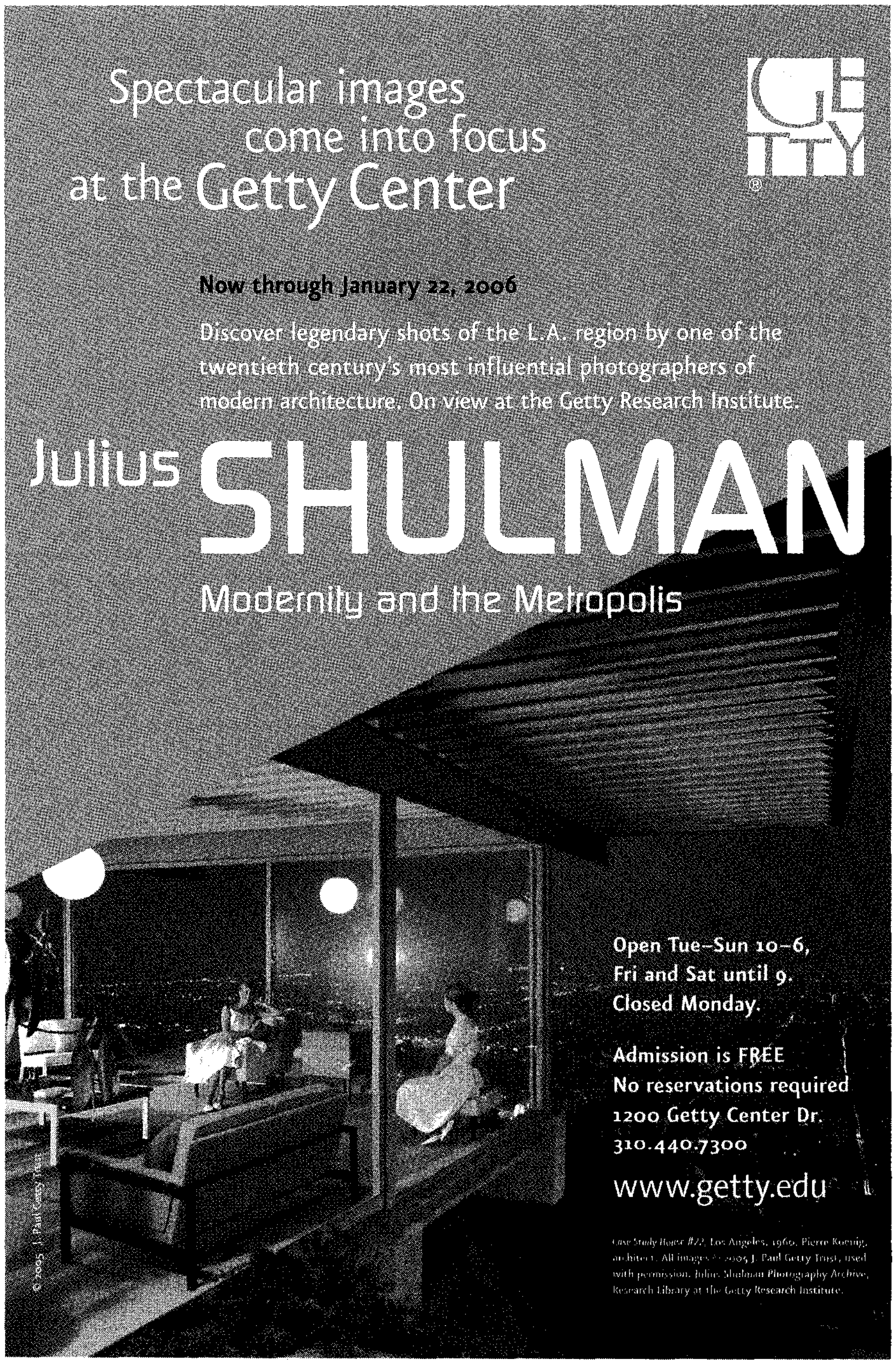
## NOW PLAYING

**CAPOTE**
How could Truman Capote, with his high, thin, goose-quill voice and his floating palms, possibly have gained the trust of the straightforward men and women of Holcomb, Kansas, when he went there for this magazine in 1959 to investigate the pointless slaughter of four members of the Clutter family—the murders that became the subject of Capote's masterpiece, "In Cold Blood"? The writer Dan Futterman and the director Bennett Miller tell us how, and the wonderful Philip Seymour Hoffman first captures Capote physically and then works inward to the vulnerable yet rotting soul. This is easily the most intelligent and detailed film ever made about a writer's working method and character. When Capote gets a look at one of the murderers, Perry Smith (Clifton Collins, Jr.), the focus of the movie becomes the intimate, artistically necessary but morally questionable relation between artist and felon. With Catherine Keener as the novelist Harper Lee; Mark Pellegrino as Perry's partner, Dick Hickock; and Bob Balaban as the *New Yorker* editor William Shawn, who is pictured, bizarrely, as hungry for the bloody details of the crime.—*David Denby* (Reviewed in our issue of 10/10/05.) (In wide release.)

**ELIZABETHTOWN**
Vacuous. Drew (Orlando Bloom), a handsome young man, loses a fortune for an international sneaker company by designing a silly shoe—and then his father dies. He's in deep trouble, yet he can't feel a thing. He travels to his father's birthplace, Elizabethtown, Kentucky, and confronts the enormous family of busybodies his dad left behind decades ago. But these are his father's people, not Drew's, and he walks through the noisy family gatherings in a bemused fog. A chipper flight attendant (Kirsten Dunst), whom he had met on the plane to Kentucky, decides to bring him to life, and their affair takes off in an interminable cell-phone conversation. The writer-director Cameron Crowe is attempting a modern screwball comedy—the kind of thing that, sixty years ago, would have been a swiftly paced romantic farce—but he has scaled the movie as an epic and turned his heroine into a font of New Age wisdom. At times the movie is so pointless that one becomes aware of the footage remorselessly moving through the projector. With Susan Sarandon as Drew's widowed mom, who capers all over the place at an embarrassing memorial service.—*D.D.* (10/24/05) (In wide release.)

**FLIGHTPLAN**
Jodie Foster stars as a grief-stricken aeronautical engineer travelling home to New York with her six-year-old daughter to bury her husband. When she awakes after a short nap and finds her child gone, none of the other passengers remember seeing the little girl, and it's up to Foster, in perfect closeup, to act up a storm and demand action. With gliding camerawork and amazing production design (the two-story aircraft was built by Alexander Hammond), the director, Robert Schwentke, gives Foster plenty of room in which to panic. But the film is seriously underwritten and devolves into a ludicrous finale.—*Bruce Diones* (In wide release.)

**FULL METAL JACKET**
Stanley Kubrick's Vietnam film from 1987 stays reasonably close to its source, Gustav Hasford's compressed, white-hot novel "The Short-Timers," yet the novel has an accumulating force of horror and the movie doesn't. The first three-quarters of an hour is basic training in the Marines stripped down to a cartoonish horror show; it's military S & M, and the pounding compulsiveness can easily be taken for the work of a master director. After that, the movie becomes dispersed, and you can't



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*Case Study House #22*, Los Angeles, 1960. Pierre Koenig, architect. All images © 2005 J. Paul Getty Trust, used with permission. Julius Shulman Photography Archive, Research Library at the Getty Research Institute.

get an emotional reading on it. Kubrick probably believes he's numbing us by the power of his vision, but he's actually numbing us by its emptiness as he attempts to define the American crisis of the twentieth century. He does it by lingering for a near-pornographic eternity over a young Vietnamese woman who is in pain and pleads "Shoot me! Shoot me!" This is James M. Cain in Vietnam. The script is by Kubrick, Michael Herr, and Hasford. Shot in England, with Matthew Modine as Private Joker, who wears a peace symbol; Vincent D'Onofrio as poor, doughy-faced Pyle; Lee Ermey as the gunnery sergeant; and Arliss Howard, Dorian Harewood, and Adam Baldwin.—*Pauline Kael* (BAM Rose Cinemas; Nov. 1.)

### GOOD NIGHT, AND GOOD LUCK

George Clooney's nifty account of Edward R. Murrow's historic prime-time assaults on Senator Joseph R. McCarthy, in 1954, imitates many of Murrow's best qualities—it's swift, elegant, grimly humorous, and effective. David Strathairn gets the suavely streamlined Murrow perfectly—the pomaded jet-black hair, the thick brows and unblinking eyes, the curt, rhyming syntax and firm emphasis. Celebrating the end of McCarthyism is only part of Clooney's game. His most serious intention appears to be to deliver a blow to the patella of a somnolent American press that, until recently, has indulged the Bush Administration's most extravagant smears and lies. He has completely succeeded. With Clooney himself as Murrow's partner, Fred Friendly, and Frank Langella as the CBS chairman William S. Paley. Robert Elswit did the black-and-white cinematography, which matches kinescopes of McCarthy's actual speeches.—*D.D.* (10/10/05) (In wide release.)

### A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE

David Cronenberg's latest is a noirish story about a seemingly settled Indiana man, Tom Stall (Viggo Mortensen), who displays an unsuspected talent for violence when a couple of killers invade the café he runs in a small town. Soon after, a mobster from Philadelphia with a glass eye (Ed Harris) shows up and addresses Tom as "Joey." Is some sort of buried past taking over Tom's life? The movie asks us to believe that one man can carry two entirely different personalities within him and still be as sane as daylight. Cronenberg's direction, mirroring the split in Tom, is alternately measured and frighteningly explosive, and, as always, he gives the movie a nasty underlay of sexual perversity. With Maria Bello, Ashton Holmes, and, as still another Philadelphia mobster, William Hurt, who seems to be having a ball.—*D.D.* (In wide release.)

### IN COLD BLOOD

Scott Wilson gives the best performance of 1967 as Dick Hickock, who comes up with a plot to rob ten thousand dollars from the Kansan farmhouse of the Clutter family and get away with it by leaving no witnesses—that is, by killing everyone there. All twinkling, cocksure enthusiasm, he's living in some skewed America of his mind, whether he's calling his partner in crime, Perry Smith (Robert Blake), a "killing machine" as if that were a nifty new device, or sincerely asking a prostitute if their coitus was "really good." Blake's Smith operates like a dark cloud against the bizarre sunniness of Wilson's Hickock, and the two are so excellent together that they almost overcome the preachy script. The writer-director, Richard Brooks, whittles down Truman Capote's famous nonfiction novel into an exercise in social conscience—with Smith-Hickock and the Clutters representing what John Edwards would call "the two Americas"—and ends it with a tract against capital punishment. Though Brooks filmed on actual locations, he found no way to integrate the camera-shy performances of the locals in small parts with the bland John Forsythe as the lawman Alvin Dewey and the oracular Paul Stewart as a Greek-chorus magazine journalist who is (deliberately) nothing like Capote. Still, like "Midnight Cowboy," this is one of those movies whose lead performances make it more than the sum of its mismatched parts.—*Michael Sragow* (Film Forum; Oct. 28-Nov. 1.)

### IN HER SHOES

Unlovely Rose (Toni Collette) is a lawyer living alone in Philadelphia. From time to time she is called upon to rescue, house, or help her wayward sister Maggie (Cameron Diaz), whose hobbies include falling into alcoholic stupors and collecting unsuitable men. Finally, the strain becomes too great, and Maggie flees in desperation to Florida, where Ella (Shirley MacLaine), the formidable grandmother whom neither sister has seen since childhood, resides in a retirement home. From here, Curtis Hanson's movie plays two tunes in parallel—the taming of Maggie, under benign Florida sunshine, and the blossoming of Rose in the hands of Simon (Mark Feuerstein), a colleague from her law firm. Hanson and his screenwriter, Susannah Grant, are efficient managers of the emotional progress made by their characters; but why does it take more than two hours to arrive at a reconciliation that was visible in the first ten minutes? In comparison with Hanson's other work, in "L.A. Confidential" and "Wonder Boys," this project feels dangerously confected, sliding at times toward the cute. The best reason to stick with it is the scene in which Cameron Diaz reads an Elizabeth Bishop poem to an elderly blind man, played with curt charm by Norman Lloyd.—*Anthony Lane* (10/17/05) (In wide release.)

### KISS KISS, BANG BANG

Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (In wide release.)

### NINE LIVES

In each of these nine vignettes about a critical moment in nine women's lives, the writer-director Rodrigo García shamelessly milks such sensitive subjects as imprisonment, incest, abortion, disability, cancer, suicide, adultery, and the death of a child. The cast of notables (including Glenn Close, Joe Mantegna, and Holly Hunter) indulge in the stagy mannerisms of acting class. Each story is filmed in a single long take of lazy imprecision: the pseudo-documentary technique packages the contrived proceedings as unvarnished truth.—*Richard Brody* (Angelika Film Center and Paris.)

### NORTH COUNTRY

Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema. (In wide release.)

### PROOF

Catherine (Gwyneth Paltrow) appears to have inherited the mathematical gifts of her father, Robert (Anthony Hopkins). The question is, has he also handed down his fragility of mind? The kinship of brilliance and madness is not exactly the freshest topic for investigation, and John Madden's film, adapted from David Auburn's play, doesn't bring much to the party. There is suspense, of a kind, when a new mathematical proof of startling ambition—and uncertain provenance—is found in Robert's desk after his death, but apart from that the movie unfolds in a mood of worrisome glumness. When Catherine's non-geeky sister Claire (Hope Davis) arrives from New York for the funeral, we are meant to find her mean and brittle, but there is much to be said for her exasperation, and, as is so often the case, what struck theatre audiences as smart and provoking winds up onscreen looking smug. With Jake Gyllenhaal as a math graduate and part-time drummer, who would be well advised not to give up his day job.—*A.L.* (9/19/05) (In wide release.)

### THE SQUID AND THE WHALE

The time is 1986, in Brooklyn's idyllic Park Slope, and a family is breaking up. The dad, Bernard (Jeff Daniels), a college literature teacher and an increasingly unsuccessful novelist, has become a sour and selfish liar; the mom, Joan (Laura Linney), can't stop leaving evidence of her love affairs around the house. Trying to hold on to their love for their parents, their two boys fall into increasingly nutty imitative behavior. Walt (Jesse Eisenberg), sixteen, parrots every one of his dad's huffy opinions; Frank (Owen Kline), a twelve-year-old in a sexual uproar, imitates his mom's indiscretions by rubbing his crotch against library shelves and leaving deposits on schoolbooks and lockers. The movie is a satirical comedy—ruthless and heartbreaking—but a comedy nonetheless; the writer-director Noah Baumbach has captured the way educated parents project their self-love and their career anxieties onto bright children, and the way kids respond to the currents of parental misconduct like pilot fish shimmying around a wayward shark. Baumbach's touch is light, sure, devastating. With Anna Paquin as a creative-writing-student

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## DVD NOTES
## SCARE TACTICS

"Shadows in the Dark," the documentary accompanying the terrific new DVD boxed set **"The Val Lewton Horror Collection"** (Warner Home Video), sets up Lewton and Orson Welles as opposites, with Welles the extravagant director of groundbreaking masterpieces and Lewton the frugal producer of low-budget horror movies. But in many ways the two were similar: they prized ingenuity and invention over plodding, expensive craftsmanship; they turned the camera into a performer; they made their soundtracks as poetic and powerful as their imagery; and they rarely enjoyed easy relations with R.K.O.'s front office. But Lewton was the one who helped save R.K.O. after the studio savagely truncated (and took a box-office beating on) Welles's "The Magnificent Ambersons." Frustrated in his former job as David O. Selznick's West Coast story editor, Lewton created a crack unit for R.K.O. that fashioned classy short features for B-picture prices under racy titles like "Cat People" (1942)—an ironic terror tale about an innocent Serbian girl (Simone Simon) who fears that if she makes love to her all-American husband she will turn into a man-eating big cat. It was their kickoff feature, and a giant hit.

According to the late Robert Wise, who began as an editor for Welles and Lewton and went on to become one of Lewton's best directors, the producer's key insight was that the gravest fear for an audience is the fear of the unknown. Lewton and company tapped into that fear through audio and visual suggestion rather than grotesque, explicit bloodletting. The DVD set features Lewton's nine essential, offbeat thrillers, including Wise's 1944 directorial début, "The Curse of the Cat People," an acute study of childhood imaginary-friend syndrome, and his insidiously creepy expansion of Robert Louis Stevenson's grave-digging short story, "The Body Snatcher" (1945). But Lewton found his dream—or nightmare—partner in Jacques Tourneur, who directed "Cat People," "The Leopard Man" (1943), and "I Walked with a Zombie" (1943), an enveloping mood piece about love, revenge, and voodoo that shows off the Lewton-Tourneur team in peak form. A riff on "Jane Eyre," it stars Frances Dee as a Canadian nurse who takes a job tending the ambulatory, mentally dead wife (Christine Gordon) of a West Indian plantation owner (Tom Conway). Lewton's screenwriters, Curt Siodmak and Ardel Wray, knew how to make the occult and the psychological converge, while Tourneur, a master at orchestrating shadowy forms, gave supernatural doings the force of poetic justice.

—*Michael Sragow*

hustler and William Baldwin as a sexually available tennis pro.—*D.D.* (10/24/05) (In wide release.)

**TWO FOR THE MONEY**

There is little to hang on to in this sports-gambling drama directed by D. J. Caruso, which stars Matthew McConaughey as Brandon, a spent athlete who can pick the winners; Al Pacino as the king sports-score consultant who lures Brandon from Vegas to New York; and Rene Russo as Pacino's sexy, earnest wife with a past. McConaughey and Russo give fine, if inoffensive, performances, and Pacino reins in his manic tendencies and at times looks so tired that he seems completely authentic. Things pick up when Brandon demands his piece of the action, but the film fails to generate any emotional response to the heavy father-figure plot. Following a barrage of psychological explanation for the pathological pleasure of betting comes the punch line: as much as the characters try to apply skill to their work, they might as well flip a coin.—*Shauna Lyon* (In wide release.)

**WALLACE & GROMIT: THE CURSE OF THE WERE-RABBIT**

After their triumphant appearances in short films such as "The Wrong Trousers," Wallace and Gromit—respectively, a pale plasticine man and his clever plasticine dog, created by the British animator Nick Park—have at last been honored with a full-length film of their own. The result has been described as a vegetarian horror movie, not something you see every day. The agelessly English town where our heroes live falls prey to a giant rabbit, which plows through the carrots and lettuces that are lovingly cultivated by the populace. The hunt for the pest accelerates toward the kind of climactic chase that Park fans—not far removed from the thrill-tipsy audiences who crowded into early silent comedies—have come to expect. If anything, the new film is slightly too frantic for its own good, affording Wallace and his long-suffering mutt precious little opportunity to hang out in their enviable home. But the strange blend of the domestic and the futuristic pioneered by Park remains intact, and devotees will be relieved to see, as always, the thumb marks in the plasticine; these figures have their own complete existence, yet they were wrought by human hand. With voices by Peter Sallis, Ralph Fiennes, and Helena Bonham Carter.—*A.L.* (10/17/05) (In wide release.)

**WHERE THE TRUTH LIES**

A hard-breathing young journalist (Alison Lohman) pokes into the mysterious breakup, years ago, of a night-club performing team—the irrepressible Lanny Morris (Kevin Bacon) and the rather severe Vince Collins (Colin Firth). Atom Egoyan's new erotic drama, based on a Rupert Holmes novel, manages to be convoluted and sordid at the same time, and Bacon and Firth never really click. There's much disrobing and drunken carrying on in hotel suites, but the secret that the men have been harboring turns out to be rather tired. Who ever thought the dirty truth could be this unexciting?—*D.D.* (In wide release.)

## *Also Playing*

**DOMINO:** In wide release. **THE FOG:** In wide release. **INNOCENCE:** Cinema Village. **SERENITY:** In wide release. **SHOPGIRL:** In wide release. **STAY:** In wide release. **TIM BURTON'S CORPSE BRIDE:** In wide release. **USHPIZIN:** Lincoln Plaza Cinemas and Sunshine Cinema.

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## REVIVALS, CLASSICS, ETC.

*Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.*

**ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES**

32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (212-505-5181)— "New Filmmakers and Screamkings.com Present a Night of Halloween Horror." Oct. 26 at 7: "Camp Daze" (2005, Alex Pucci). ♦ New York première. Oct. 26 at 7:30 and Oct. 27 at 7:30 and 9:30: "The Time We Killed" (2005, Jennifer Todd Reeves). ♦ "Derek Jarman: Early Films." Oct. 28 at 7 and Oct. 29 at 9: Short films by Jarman (1970-77). ♦ Oct. 28 at 9:30 and Oct. 30 at 7: Short films by Jarman (1973-84). ♦ Oct. 29 at 7 and Oct. 30 at 9:30: Music videos by Jarman. ♦ "Essential Cinema." Oct. 29 at 5:15: "Forward, Soviet!" (1926, Dziga Vertov; silent). ♦ Oct. 30 at 5:15: "A Sixth of the World" (1926, Vertov; silent).

**BAM ROSE CINEMAS**

30 Lafayette Ave., Brooklyn (718-636-4100)—"New French Connection." All films are in French. Oct. 26 at 7:30 and 9:30: "Profiles of Farmers: Daily Life" (2005, Raymond Depardon). ♦ Oct. 27 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:15: "Olga's Chignon" (2002, Jérôme Bonnell). ♦ Oct. 28 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:30: "Pale Eyes" (2005, Bonnell). ♦ Oct. 29 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:30: "The Intruder" (2004, Claire Denis). ♦ Oct. 30 at 2, 4:30, 6:50, and 9:15: "La Petite Chartreuse" (2005, Jean-Pierre Denis). ♦ "A Moving Camera: Kenji Mizoguchi." Oct. 31 at 4:30, 6:50, and 9:15: "Ugetsu Monogatari" (1953; in Japanese). ♦ "Full Metal Jacket Diary." Nov. 1 at 4:30 and 7: "Full Metal Jacket" (†), followed by a discussion with the actor Matthew Modine.

**FILM FORUM**

W. Houston St. west of Sixth Ave. (212-727-8110)—In revival. Oct. 26-27 at 1, 3:10, 5:20, 7:40, and 10: "The Conformist" (1970, Bernardo Bertolucci; in Italian). ♦ Oct. 28-Nov. 1 at 1, 3:40, 7, and 9:30: "In Cold Blood" (†). ♦ Through Nov. 17: "Naruse: The Unknown Japanese Master," the films of Mikio Naruse. All films are in Japanese. Oct. 26 at 1, 4:30, and 8: "The Approach of Autumn" (1960). ♦ Oct. 26 at 2:40, 6:10, and 9:40: "Sudden Rain" (1956). ♦ Oct. 27 at 1, 3:30, 6, and 8:30: "Daughters, Wives and a Mother" (1960). ♦ Oct. 28-29 at 1, 3:30, 6, and 8:30: "Floating Clouds" (1955). ♦ Oct. 30-31 at 1, 3:20, 5:40, and 8: "Flowing" (1963). ♦ Nov. 1 at 1, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30, and 9:40: "Anzukko" (1958).

**FLORENCE GOULD HALL**

55 E. 59th St. (212-355-6160)—"Cinéma Tuesdays." Nov. 1 at 12:30, 4, and 7: "Cyrano de Bergerac" (1990, Jean-Paul Rappeneau; in French).

**IFC CENTER**

323 Sixth Ave., at W. 3rd St. (212-924-7771)—In revival. "Symbiopsychotaxiplasm: Take One" (1968, William Greaves). ♦ "Weekend Classics." Oct. 28-30 at noon: "Such a Gorgeous Kid Like Me" (1972, François Truffaut; in French). ♦ "Waverly Midnights." Oct. 28-29: "Beyond the Valley of the Dolls" (1970, Russ Meyer). ♦ "Stranger Than Fiction," a documentary series. Nov. 1 at 9:30: "August in the Empire State" (2005, Gabriel Rhodes and Keefe Murren).

**MUSEUM OF MODERN ART**

Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (212-708-9480)—Through Nov. 23: The films of Isabelle Huppert. All films are in French. Oct. 26 at 6: "The Ceremony" (1995, Claude Chabrol). ♦ Oct. 26 at 8:30: "La Vie Promise" (2002, Olivier Dahan). ♦ Oct. 28 at 8 and Oct. 30 at 2: "The Piano Teacher" (2001, Michael Haneke). ♦ Oct. 29 at 2: "Madame Bovary" (1991, Chabrol). ♦ Oct. 29 at 4:30: "The Separation" (1994, Christian Vincent). ♦ Oct. 31 at 6: "Heaven's Gate" (1980, Michael Cimino). ♦ "Jerome: Hill and Foundation." Oct. 26 at 8:30: "Moment of Impact" (1998, Julia Loktev; in English and Russian). ♦ Oct. 27 at 6: "Flag Wars" (2003, Linda Goode Bryant and Laura Poitras). ♦ Oct. 27 at 8: "Nobody's Business" (1996, Alan Berliner) and "Dance of Darkness" (1989, Edin Velez). ♦ Oct. 28 at 6: A program of short films (1989-2002). ♦ Oct. 29 at 4: "Albert Schweitzer" (1957, Jerome Hill). ♦ Oct. 29 at 6: "Wax, or the Discovery of the Television Among the Bees" (1991, David Blair). ♦ Oct. 29 at 8: "Work" (1996, Rachel Reichman). ♦ Oct. 30 at 2: "The Bachar Tapes" (2001, Walid Ra'ad and the Atlas Group). ♦ Oct. 30 at 4: "Third Known Nest" (1999, Tom Kalin) and "Lost Book Found" (1996, Jem Cohen). ♦ Oct. 31 at 8: "The Deadman" (1987, Peggy Ahwesh and Keith Sanborn) and a program of short films by Leslie Thornton (1987-89). ♦ "Early Autumn: Masterworks of Japanese Cinema from the National Film Center, Tokyo." All films are in Japanese. Oct. 27 at 5:30: "The Moderns" (1952, Minoru Shibuya). ♦ Oct. 27 at 8: "Monday Girl" (1964, Ko Nakahira). ♦ Oct. 28 at 5:30: "A Story Written with Water" (1965, Yoshishige Yoshida). ♦ Oct. 29 at 6:30: "A Certain Killer" (1967, Kazuo Mori). ♦ Oct. 29 at 8:30: "Bad Boy" (1961, Susumu Hani). ♦ Oct. 30 at 5: "I'll Buy You" (1956, Masaki Kobayashi). ♦ Oct. 31 at 6: "Attack of the Mushroom People" (1963, Ishiro Honda).

**MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE**

35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (718-784-0077)—"Fist and Sword: Martial Arts Film Classics." Oct. 28 at 7:30: "Oldboy" (2003, Park Chanwook; in Korean). ♦ "Some Like It Wilder: The Complete Billy Wilder." Oct. 29 at 2: "Ace in the Hole" (1951). ♦ Oct. 29 at 4:30 and Oct. 30 at 4: "The Fortune Cookie" (1966). ♦ Oct. 30 at 2: "Buddy Buddy" (1981). ♦ Repertory nights. Oct. 29 at 7:30 and Oct. 30 at 6:30: "Zabriskie Point" (1970, Michelangelo Antonioni).

*Jack Nicholson stars in Michelangelo Antonioni's "The Passenger," from 1975.*

SAKO SHAHINIAN

**SUNSHINE CINEMA**

143 E. Houston St. (212-330-8182)—Midnight movies. Oct. 28-29: "The Nightmare Before Christmas" (1993, Henry Selick).

**THALIA THEATRE**

Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. (212-864-5400)—"Just Kidding!" Oct. 29 at 11 A.M. and 2: "A Little Something Spooky: Halloween on the Big Screen," a program of cartoons. ♦ "Children in the 20th Century." Oct. 30 at 4 and Nov. 1 at 6 (double feature): "Nobody Knows" (2004, Hirokazu Koreeda; in Japanese) and "Landscape in the Mist" (1988, Theo Angelopoulos; in Greek).

**WALTER READE THEATRE**

Lincoln Center (212-875-5600)—Through Nov. 10: "A Centenary of Chinese Cinema." All films are in Mandarin. Oct. 26 at 3 and 7: "Plunder of Peach and Plum" (1934, Ying Yunwei). ♦ Oct. 27 at 1:30 and Oct. 29 at 3:15: "New Woman" (1934, Cai Chusheng). ♦ Oct. 27 at 3:45 and Oct. 29 at 1: "Crossroads" (1937, Shen Xiling). ♦ Oct. 27 at 9: "Black Snow" (1990, Xie Fei). ♦ Oct. 30 at 1 and Oct. 31 at 7:30: "Street Angel" (1937, Yuan Muzhi). ♦ Oct. 30 at 3 and Oct. 31 at 1: "The Princess of Iron Fan" (1941, Wan Laiming and Wan Guchan). ♦ Oct. 30 at 4:30 and Oct. 31 at

9:20: "Spring in a Small Town" (1948, Fei Mu). ♦ Oct. 30 at 6:30 and Oct. 31 at 2:30: "Long Live the Mistress!" (1947, Shang Hu). ♦ Oct. 30 at 8:20 and Nov. 1 at 1: "Along the Sungari River" (1947, Jin Shan). ♦ Nov. 1 at 3:30 and 5:30: "The Peregrinations of Three Hairs" (1949, Zhao Ming and Yan Gong). ♦ Nov. 1 at 5:15 and 9:15: "Crows and Sparrows" (1949, Zheng Junli). ♦ "Independents Night." Oct. 27 at 6:30: "Learning to Swallow" (2005, Danielle Beverly).

## READINGS AND TALKS

**"THE SECRET HISTORIES"**
John S. Friedman, who recently edited this anthology of pieces on Watergate, tobacco studies, the massacre at My Lai, and other instances of cover-up, corruption, and tragedy, joins the journalists Philip Gourevitch, Morley Safer, and Mark Danner to discuss the book. (Wollman Auditorium, Cooper Union, 51 Astor Pl. No tickets necessary. Oct. 26 at 6:30.)

**JANE KENYON CELEBRATION**
Carol Muske Dukes, Galway Kinnell, Peter D. Kramer, Alice Mattison, and Joyce Peseroff mark the publication of two new books: Kenyon's collected poems and "Simply Lasting: Writers on Jane Kenyon." (Barnes & Noble, 4 Astor Pl. No tickets necessary. Oct. 26 at 7.)

**GOETHE-INSTITUT NEW YORK**
The German critic Denis Scheck joins the writer Liesl Schillinger and two of this year's top-selling authors in Germany—Daniel Kehlmann and Matthias Politycki—for a bilingual reading and discussion. (Fifth Ave. between 82nd and 83rd Sts. For reservations, call 212-439-8688. Oct. 27 at 6:30.)

**CHUCK CLOSE**
The artist talks with Paul Goldberger, a critic for this magazine and the dean of Parsons the New School for Design. (Tishman Auditorium, the New School, 66 W. 12th St. 212-229-5488. Oct. 27 at 6:30.)

**POETRY SOCIETY OF AMERICA**
The society celebrates its ninety-fifth anniversary with Edward Hirsch, Mary Karr, Maria Tucci, and other writers and actors reading from their favorite poems written since 1910. With music by American Opera Projects. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. For more information, call 212-254-9628. Oct. 27 at 7.)

**A TRIBUTE TO ROBERT CREELEY**
John Ashbery, Amiri Baraka, Lisa Jarnot, Vincent Katz, Anne Waldman, and others honor the poet, who died in March of this year. (Poetry Project, St. Mark's-in-the-Bowery, Second Ave. at 10th St. No tickets necessary. Oct. 29 at 1.)

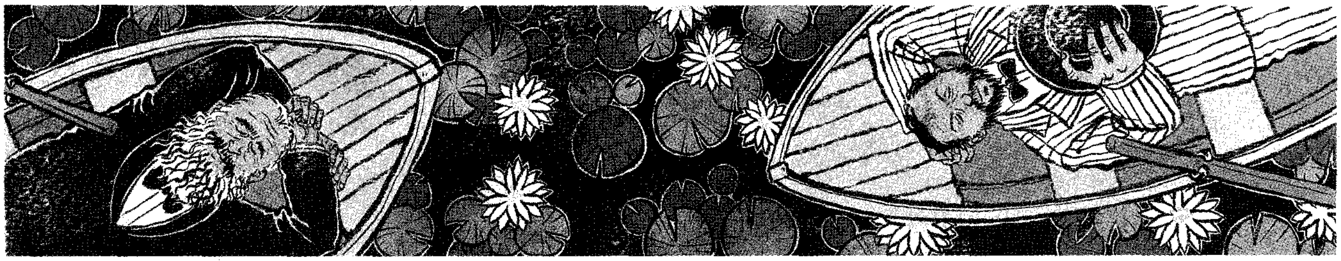
**"FOOD NIGHT!"**
Julie Powell, whose book "Julie & Julia: 365 Days, 524 Recipes, 1 Tiny Apartment" describes how she cooked every recipe in Julia Child's "Mastering the Art of French Cooking," and Amanda Hesser, a food critic for the *Times*, read from their work. (K.G.B., 85 E. 4th St. No tickets necessary. Nov. 1 at 7.)

## ABOVE AND BEYOND

**"STAND-UP FOR PEACE"**
This evening of comedy to benefit Seeds of Peace, a nonprofit organization that brings together teen-agers from conflict-torn nations, features Susie Essman, Colin Quinn, Triumph the Insult Comic Dog, Caroline Rhea, and others. (Gotham Comedy Club, 208 W. 23rd St. For more information, call 212-573-8040, ext. 32. Oct. 27 at 8.)

**HALLOWEEN PARADE**
The costumed march through Greenwich Village has been called New York's Mardi Gras. The comparison is all the more accurate this year: it ends with a concert at the club Satalla to benefit the musicians of the Crescent City, which will feature the Rebirth Brass Band and other New Orleans groups, along with the locals in the Hungry March Band. Prior to the show, the bands will join in the parade, which will include a rising-phoenix puppet (first built for the Halloween parade following 9/11) and giant colorful lanterns painted with New Orleans street scenes. (The parade starts on Oct. 31 at 7 at Spring St. and runs up Sixth Ave. to 21st St. The concert at Satalla, 37 W. 26th St., starts at 9. For more information, visit www.halloween-nyc.com.)

**AUCTIONS AND ANTIQUES**
**Christie's**, which has been the benchmark lately in sales of Impressionist and modern art, mounts an impressive evening sale on Nov. 1 that will include such works as Toulouse-Lautrec's "La Blanchisseuse" (expected to sell for up to twenty-five million dollars), Matisse's "Les Marguerites," and Monet's "Nymphéas," among other masterpieces. (The sale continues on Nov. 2.) Other notable events include an auction of nineteenth-century European art on Oct. 26. (20 Rockefeller Plaza, at 49th St. 212-636-2000.) ♦ **Sotheby's** hosts two important sales of European silver on Oct. 26. (York Ave. at 72nd St. 212-606-7000.) ♦ **Swann's** annual "Magic" auction, on Oct. 27, is devoted to the collection of Christian Fechner, a French film producer with a passion for the art of illusion. The sale will feature posters and ephemera from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, among them the only known copy of a Houdini poster from 1920 ("Jesse L. Laski Présente Houdini dans l'Ile de la Terreur"). (104 E. 25th St. 212-254-4710.)



YUKO SHIMIZU

## ON THE HORIZON

### NIGHT LIFE
### STILL HOT
*Nov. 8-13*

The legendary Cuban pianist Bebo Valdés, who was the musical director of the Tropicana in Havana before Fidel Castro seized power, fled his homeland in 1960. He lived quietly in Sweden for decades, but in recent years he has recorded a flurry of albums. Next month, Valdés—who is also the father of the esteemed pianist Chucho Valdés—makes his first New York City club appearance, at the Village Vanguard. (212-255-4037.)

### ART
### RUSCHA'S EMPIRE
*Nov. 17-Jan. 29*

For his new installation of paintings, Ed Ruscha filters his 1992 "Blue Collar" series through the lens of Thomas Cole's 1836 cycle, "The Course of Empire." The work was a hit at the Venice Biennale; its only Stateside appearance will be at the Whitney. (800-944-8639.)

### THE THEATRE
### CHITA, AS CHITA
*Nov. 23*

Chita Rivera began her Broadway career in 1957 playing Anita in "West Side Story" and went on to be nominated for eight Tony Awards; she won two. She gets a shot at another nomination when she stars in a new musical about her life and career, "Chita Rivera: The Dancer's Life," written by Terrence McNally. (212-239-6200.)

### MOVIES
### WOODY'S NEW YORK
*Nov. 28*

Woody Allen makes a rare public appearance to discuss his film career in an onstage conversation at Lincoln Center at Alice Tully Hall before the first American screening of his latest film, "Match Point." The thriller, starring Scarlett Johansson and Jonathan Rhys-Meyers, opens on Christmas Day. (212-875-5050.)

### CLASSICAL MUSIC
### SEEING SOUND
*Nov. 18*

At Carnegie Hall, David Robertson conducts the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra in "Seeing Debussy, Hearing Monet," which features performances of "Prélude à l'Après-Midi d'un Faune" and "Jeux" along with a discussion exploring Impressionism in French music and painting accompanied by projections of Monet's works. (212-247-7800.)

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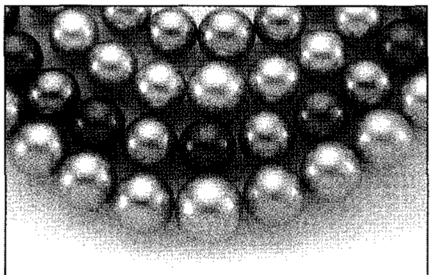

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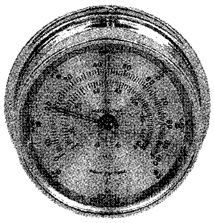

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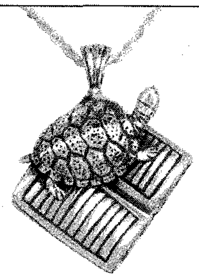

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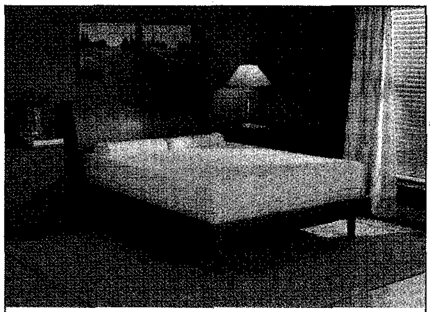

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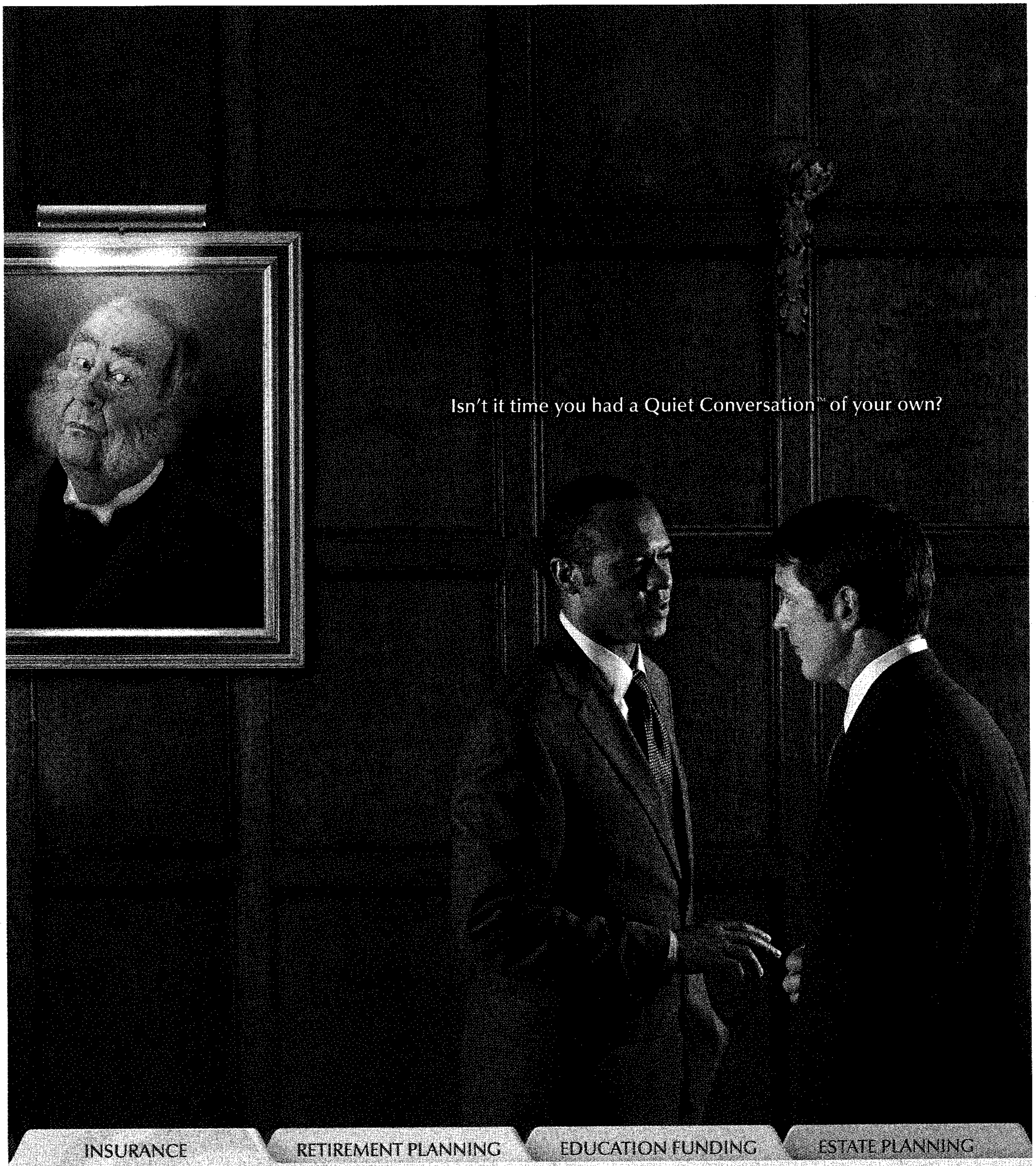
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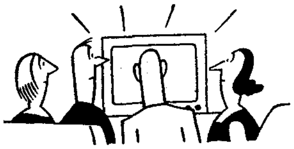
THE NEW YORKER

# THE TALK OF THE TOWN

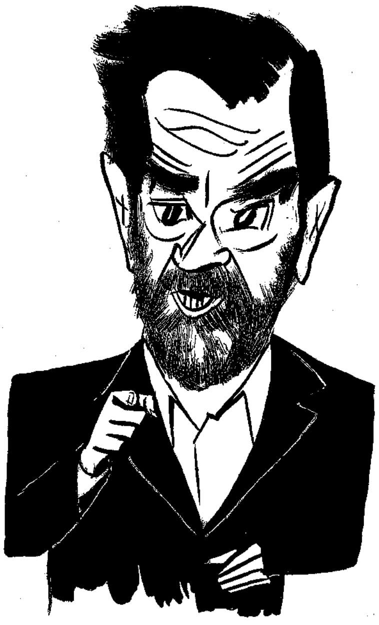
## COMMENT
## SADDAM ON TRIAL



In different circumstances, the image of Saddam Hussein and seven other Baath Party officials sitting inside the defendants' corrals of a Baghdad courtroom would have been a simple tableau of justice. On October 19th, they heard charges and entered not-guilty pleas in the killings of more than a hundred and forty men and boys in the Shiite town of Dujail in 1982. Everything about the scene suggested that the modern history of the Middle East is being rewritten in Iraq. The ex-President was not a bullet-riddled corpse propped up before television cameras, like one of his predecessors (Abdul Karim Qasim, in 1963), or a collection of body parts dragged through the streets of Baghdad, like another (Nuri es-Said, in 1958). Saddam was alive, in good health, his hair dyed black, his suit respectable; and he was permitted to address the court with the vainglorious defiance of the President he still believes himself to be. At his first court appearance, in the summer of 2004, Saddam looked confused and cowed, as if he were expecting the summary justice that his own revolutionary courts once handed down to tens of thousands of Iraqis. By last week, he seemed to have realized that the nature of justice had changed in Iraq, along with power, and a shadow of his old swagger was back.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

The chief judge, the graying and even-tempered Rizgar Mohamed Amin, is a Kurd. He belongs to an ethnic group that has been barely tolerated in the Arab world when it hasn't been actively persecuted; but, sitting in judgment over a dictator responsible for the deaths of almost two hundred thousand Kurds, Judge Amin displayed respect and firmness in exactly the right proportion. Between Saddam's delusional claims of Arab and Islamic glory and Amin's steady focus on the particulars of the case, the difference between a reign of terror and the rule of law was made vivid. Outside the courtroom, around the country, life came virtually to a halt as Iraqis watched the televised proceedings and were free to debate their meaning.



But other aspects of the trial make its difficult circumstances painfully clear. Reporters and others in attendance had to pass through multiple levels of security inspections, including three-hundred-and-sixty-degree body scans, to get inside. The courtroom itself, in the old Baath Party headquarters, is a fortified chamber inside the fortified Green Zone, and setting up the trial has cost American, not Iraqi, taxpayers some hundred and thirty million dollars. The five judges in the case were trained largely by American experts; the Special Tribunal that is administering the trials of former Baathists was established under American occupation, by American officials, with American money. The identities of the judges, apart from that of Amin, have been kept secret for their own protection, and they work under heavy guard. Nor are the defendants' lawyers immune from Iraq's epidemic violence; one, Saadoun Sughaiyer al-Janabi, was dragged from his law offices the day after his court appearance and later found dead, shot in the head.

Iraqis are trying their former rulers in the middle of an insurgency that is sliding toward civil war. This is what makes the trial in Baghdad so different from its predecessors in Nuremberg, Arusha, and The Hague. The defendants haven't been politically or militarily defeated; thousands of Iraqis are continuing not just to demonstrate in favor of the old regime but to kill for it. The state conducting the trial is fragile, divided, and in danger of failing. Justice, in theory sterilized and pure, in fact can never be extracted from its context, especially in the trial of a political criminal on the world-historical scale of Saddam. The case against him is going to become a part of the case of Iraq—the question of what kind of country Iraq after Saddam will be. The public's reaction to the trial's first day showed how split Iraq has become along sectarian lines. In interviews, a number of Shia and Kurds expressed impatience that Saddam is even alive, favoring execution over a protracted trial. To many of them, Saddam's courtroom defiance was deeply disturbing, and even terrifying. Many Sunnis, by contrast, hailed Saddam as their leader, praised his brash manner in court, and echoed his argument that the whole affair is illegitimate, a sham perpetrated by the American occupiers. As the trial goes on, it will be skillfully manipulated by the lead defendant into an indictment of the indicters, and the divisions in the country will almost certainly grow deeper.

The trial of Saddam has become part of the larger tragedy of Iraq since his fall from power. It has divided the American and Iraqi governments from much of the rest of the world; most European countries and the United Nations have not lent support, because of the appearance of American control and the fact that the defendants could be sentenced to death. It has elicited criticism from human-rights organizations that should have been helping to collect new evidence of Saddam's crimes. It has brought out the worst in Iraq's current leaders, who have opportunistically accelerated the timetable and meddled in the selection of judges. However fair the proceedings inside that fortified courtroom—and the trial's first day suggested that Saddam will not be railroaded to the gallows—they will also have to be judged by their effect on the violent country immediately outside.

International tribunals far removed from the scenes of the crimes have been imperfect instruments of justice—ask Rwandans or Bosnians. The trial of Saddam ought to be presided over by Iraqis, in Baghdad, to achieve the larger purpose of showing justice being done in a country that has known only arbitrary power. But the pressure from Iraqi and American officials to rush ahead and try Saddam now—before the elections, in December, have any chance to create a truly representative government that can begin to forge a national consensus—almost insures that the process will set Iraqis against one another. The trial's most important lessons—accountability, the rule of law, historical understanding, and reconciliation—will need another generation.

—*George Packer*

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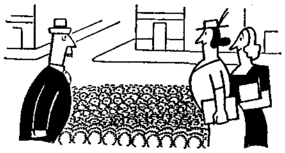
## BACKGROUND CHECK
## HARRIET'S SUMMER OF LOVE!



In February of 1969, Susan Elizabeth Reese, a first-year student at Harvard Law School, went to hear a speech by Melvin Belli, the San Francisco lawyer. At a reception afterward, she met Belli, and he ended up offering her a summer job. His firm suggested that Reese might want to bunk with the other female summer associate, a law student from Dallas. Right after Reese's last final, she flew to San Francisco and was met at the airport by her new roommate, Harriet Miers.

By the late sixties, Belli was one of the most famous and flamboyant lawyers in the country; called the "King of Torts" by *Life* for his work in the personal-injury field, he was well known for representing clients like Errol Flynn, Jack Ruby, Mae West, and Evel Knievel. A few days after Reese and Miers started work, Belli took them and a few male lawyers out to lunch. Reese recalls that he instructed the two young women to bring along paper for taking notes, and then the group piled into his Rolls-Royce. "He had me and Harriet crowd into the front seat with him," Reese said. That summer, she kept a diary, in which she recorded details about the lunch: In the car, Belli "started outlining a research problem on patents, and Harriet began writing furiously. I hadn't the vaguest idea what he was talking about and just sat there. Presently, he demanded to know which one of us could do a memo on it. I continued my silence, so poor Harriet was forced to volunteer. I apologized to her later."

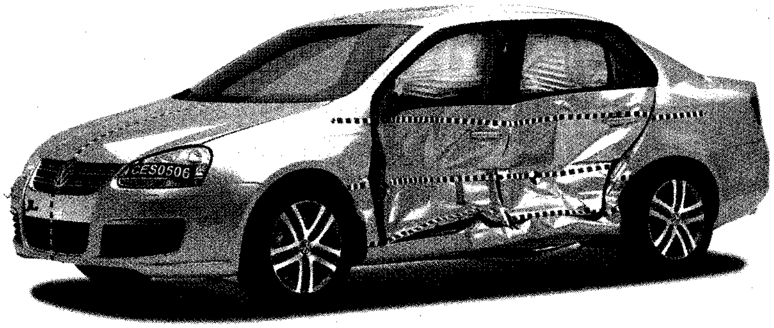
The group arrived at a seafood restaurant called the Crow's Nest and sat at a table overlooking the water. They ordered Bloody Marys and Daiquiris, and Belli started complaining about the work Reese had done on her first legal memo, which he proceeded to tear into little pieces at the table. "Belli began on Harriet when he could get no response from me," Reese wrote, but "she was able to tell Belli a few things that she'd researched and he didn't know about. In between interrogating us, Belli tried to see just how many lewd stories he could tell. . . . Harriet and I stared at each other feeling bewildered and a bit angry."

Belli fired Reese the next day, but the two women still roomed together for the rest of the summer, in a furnished two-bedroom walkup near Golden Gate Park. Miers put in the kind of long hours that have become her trademark, often working on weekends. "Harriet left for work early and stayed late," Reese recalled. "She was hardworking to the point where she didn't get to enjoy San Francisco."

Two years had passed since the Summer of Love, but San Francisco was still the swirling center of hippie culture. While other young people in the city hung out at the Fillmore East listening to long, smoky sets by Janis Joplin and Jefferson Airplane, or protested the Vietnam War in Haight-Ashbury, Miers and Reese maintained a quieter life style. "Harriet had brought a television with her from Dallas," Reese said, "and we watched the first moonwalk together." They also enjoyed attending a ticker-tape parade in honor of the Apollo astronauts. When Ted Kennedy drove his car off a bridge at Chappaquiddick that summer, they were upset. "Coming from Dallas, Harriet was particularly sensitive to the Kennedy family," Reese said.

According to her diary, the roommates' cultural tastes clashed at times: Susan preferred classical music while Harriet always played "that infernal bop music" on the radio in her compact car. (As a compromise, they would listen to the soundtrack of "West Side Story.") Since Reese didn't have a job, she did the cooking, greeting Miers after her long days at the office with dinners of tuna-fish salad and angel-food cake. Reese kept fresh flowers in the apartment, and recalled how Miers used to tie up her hair with little pieces of yarn.

Neither woman dated over the summer. "We were both aware of how few women law students there were at the



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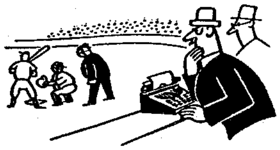
time, and we felt like we wanted to make the most of the opportunity," Reese said. "Each of us felt that serious romantic interests were inconsistent with the pursuit of a successful law career." Still, their summer was not entirely without high jinks. "Harriet would help me sneak up to the office from the basement, where Mel had this crazy room with hundreds of keys to hotel rooms he'd stayed in all over the world," Reese said. "I'd wait for Harriet to finish up. They would buzz me on the intercom to say that Belli had left, and then we'd go next door to Doro's for a drink."

At the end of the summer, Miers, Reese, and another friend drove to Dallas to meet the Miers family. Reese recalls that they got lost in Oklahoma and kept having problems with an overburdened roof rack, but the road trip was otherwise uneventful. "It was really tiring, because we drove straight through," Reese said. "Harriet needed to get back for Law Review." (That December, Belli represented the Rolling Stones in the aftermath of the fatal stabbing of a fan during the band's performance at Altamont. Belli himself died in 1996.)

Over the ensuing years, the two women corresponded occasionally, but they have not seen each other since. Reese now lives in Portland, Oregon, where she is a criminal-defense attorney. She is a liberal Democrat, but she hopes Miers is confirmed for the Supreme Court. "I think she will be a very good Justice," Reese said. "She was interested in stuff that I thought was the most boring stuff in the world."

—*Jeffrey Toobin*

## THE SPORTING SCENE
### WHITE SOX NATION



Baseball, a year past the lifting of the Curse of the Bambino, the end of the Evil Empire, and the redemption of Red Sox Nation, has come up with a World Series so free of overtones that the games themselves may have to provide the entertainment. Modern-day ball teams like to come onstage with an almost visible trail of legend and epithet—think of the Yankees, think of the Sox, think of the Braves and the Cubs and the Mets and the Montreal Expos. Loss, it will be noticed, can bestow recognition and reputation almost as firmly as dominant, repeated victory. The Houston Astros, who are playing in the first World Series of their forty-four-year history, bring only the blurry sadness of five playoff eliminations in the past decade: not much in these bleeding annals.

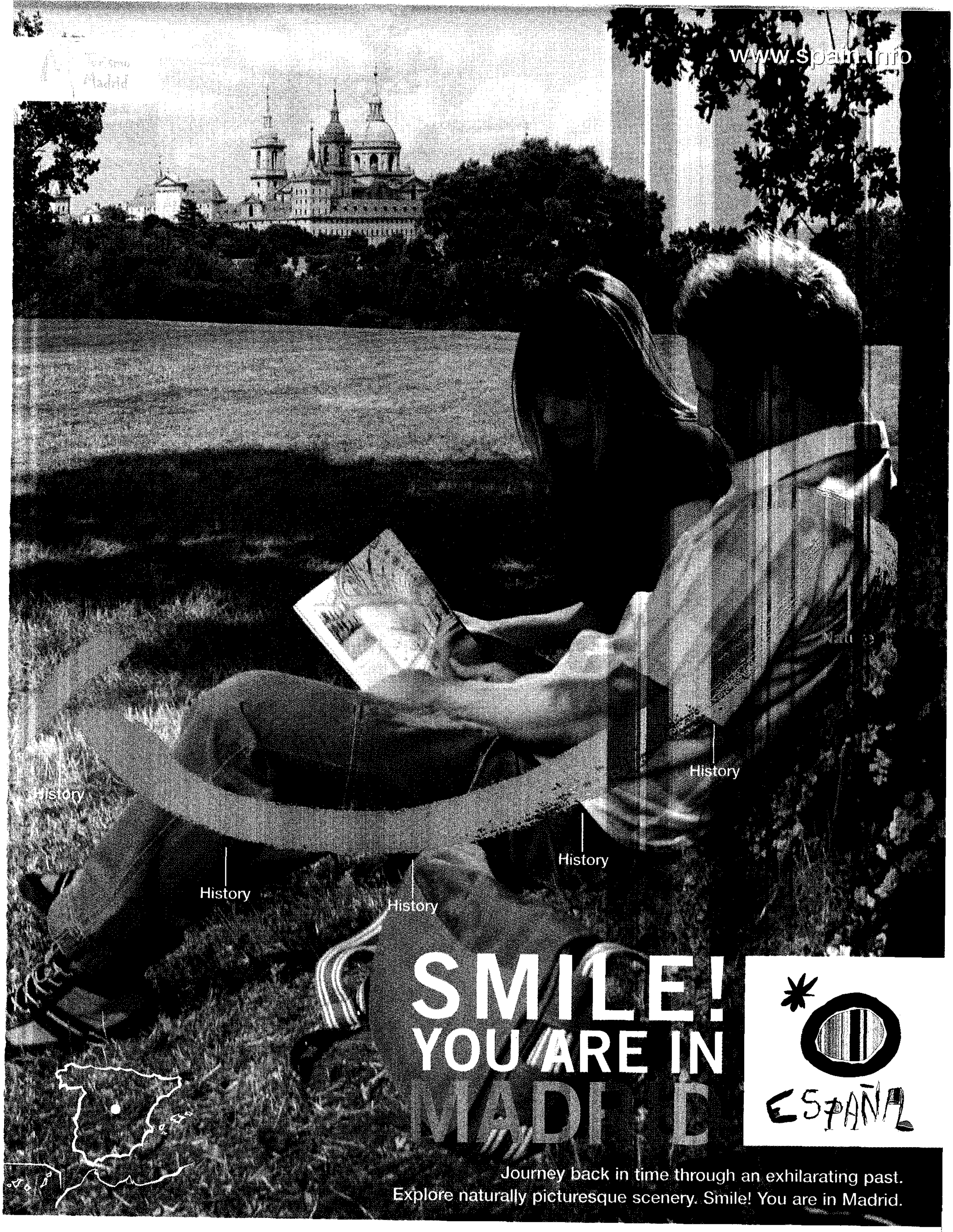
*Shoeless Joe Jackson*

Their opponents, the White Sox, are slightly better off here, springing at once to the fanly mind as Not the Cubs, and—oh, yeah—the Black Sox. The Pale Hose, in fact, have not won a World Series since 1917, and thus would appear to be a year worse off than the Red Sox, who were taunted all through that emotional summer by enemy fans holding up "1918" signs: the last time Boston won it all and a year before the team sold Babe Ruth to the Yankees. This year's White Sox won steadily through the early season, building a fifteen-game margin by August 2nd, then wobbled badly, almost giving way to the onrushing Indians near the end, but they were not much baited for their failings. Why? Why, because of the Cubs, of course—the hated North Side rivals, who have made losing into opera. The Cubs won a World Championship in 1908, then tried but failed in seven more World Series, the last in 1945. Now they are good at losing in the playoffs as well, having turned the trick four times since 1984. Their most recent defeat featured that grisly sixth-game, Steve Bartman fan-interference episode, when the Cubs, five outs away from the World Series, coughed up an eight-run inning, and then the pennant, to the Florida Marlins. All this has established the Cubs as clear leaders in the ever-popular "It's Our Turn to Win" show, now that the Red Sox have been crossed off.

The only thing the Astros had going for them when they won their pennant was a scrabbled-together demographic offered up by the Fox announcers during the N.L.C.S. playoff against the St. Louis Cardinals: not a single World Series game has ever been played in the state of Texas (What!! Great Scott, can that *be!*). No, the advantage falls clearly to the White Sox, who, if they lose again, need only to work on their Black Sox advantage and focus it on Shoeless Joe Jackson. The Mojo of Joe . . . Clueless Joe: why, the thing writes itself. Shoeless Joe Jackson, perhaps the best hitter of his day, was one of eight members of the 1919 White Sox who accepted bribes from gamblers and succeeded in throwing the World Series to the Cincinnati Reds. Banned for life from the pastime, Jackson disappeared into legend, only to suffer an almost more scarifying second act when he turned up as cute Ray Liotta in "Field of Dreams"—he'd learned to turn around and bat righty while in oblivion—where he waited manfully for an opposing team and some sense of action to appear from the cornrows.

White Sox legends of loss include pitcher Ted Lyons and shortstop Luke Appling as perennial starters in the "Hall of Famers Who Never Played in the World Series" lineup, but hardened Hose adherents—come to think of it, they're all hardened—tend to think of Wilbur Wood as the beau ideal of their tough-luck homeys: a thick-bodied knuckleballer who in 1973 won twenty-four games and also lost twenty: a level of perversity rare in the pastime. Pale Hose fans watching the Astros' seven-time Cy Young Award winner Roger Clemens in action against their team will have this record firmly in reserve, untouched and unimagined by the Rocket.

The Series that impends at this writing—No Irony Week, at last—is sweet to anticipate, what with the slashing, gently smiling Craig Biggio (home in the finals, after eighteen years' trying); the ominous mastiff Contreras; the flying Rowand; the rube-eared, hard-burning Oswalt; the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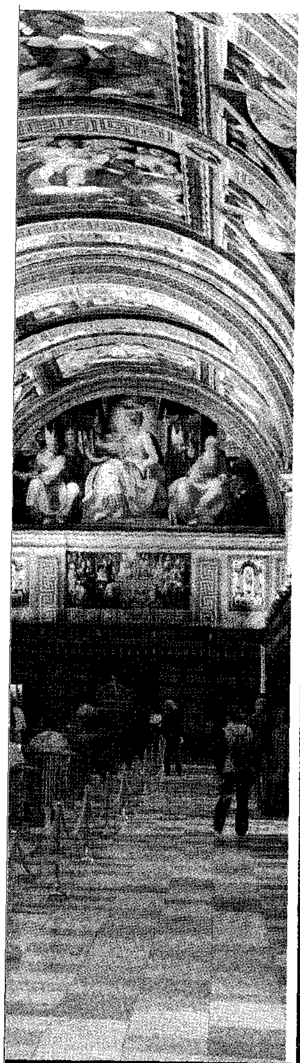

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Spain's sixteenth and seventeenth century Golden Age began during one of history's most powerful monarchies, that of Felipe II (1556–98). From the paintings of Velázquez and El Greco to Cervantes' "Don Quixote" to the poetry of Fray Luis de Leon, this was a period of magnificent artistic and political achievement.

Another product of this era, the **Monasterio de San Lorenzo de El Escorial**, about thirty miles from Madrid on the slopes of the Sierra de Guadarrama, is an architectural triumph reinforced by its UNESCO World Heritage site honor. Dating back to 1563, the massive granite palace complex was built over a period of two decades following designs by Juan Batista de Toledo (assistant to Michelangelo at St. Peter's Basilica) and later, Juan de Herrera. The scale of El Escorial is staggering, its grid-like design covers 323,000 square feet including nine towers, thirteen oratories, eighty-eight fountains, and more than two thousand windows.

The monastery itself was built to commemorate Spain and England's victory over the French at the Battle of St. Quentin in 1577. Inside the basilica a magnificent white marble Christ by Benvenuto Cellini shares the final resting place of numerous Spanish monarchs, including Felipe II and his father. The collections at El Escorial are remarkable. The library, featuring a vaulted ceiling with frescoes by Pellegrino Tibaldi, houses more than fifty-thousand rare works, including numerous manuscripts and codices in Arab and Hebrew. The El Escorial complex is open from April to late September. ■

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crinky El Duque; the scarily blinking and bending Carl Everett; Andy Pettitte’s eye, peeping over his glove; Clemens’s heart and hulk; and much more, all having at each other again and again. Color will flow from the Sox manager, Ozzie Guillen, who impulsively kissed several of his players as they came off the field after taking their pennant. Guillen is *open:* caught up in a row with the notoriously shut-down Texas manager Buck Showalter, he claimed that Showalter keeps one hand in his pocket when making a pitching change “so he doesn’t lose the key to baseball he keeps in there.” When it’s over, the runners-up and their freshly smitten fans will join the rest of us in the main business of baseball, which is Getting Over It. Bill Veeck, the dashing, peg-legged owner of the Sox during some of their worst seasons, said, “Baseball is meant to be savored,” and it was clear that he did not reserve this pleasure for those who finish on top. Ask the deposed, re-heartbroken Boston fans right now, ask us Mets and Yankees rooters. Ask the Angels and the Cardinals. Ask George. This is the only sport in which something is lost when you don’t lose.

—*Roger Angell*

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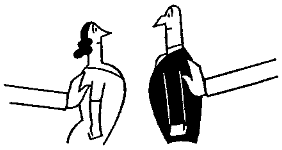
## DEPT. OF MATRIMONY
## WE DO



Maryann Reid, the engineer of Marry Your Baby Daddy Day, is neither married nor a parent. But she is an old-fashioned romantic. Although she writes fiction of the single-girl-in-the-city variety for a living (recent titles include “Sex and the Single Sister” and “Use Me or Lose Me”), she has found dating in New York a “disturbing” experience. Having become increasingly impatient with her own prospects, Reid, who is thirty and lives with her mother in Marine Park, recently turned her ambitions to those with more immediate possibilities. Her basic idea was this: Find ten cohabiting couples with kids. Plan them a free wedding.

The other day, at the House of the Lord Church, a Pentecostal congregation in downtown Brooklyn, Reid was stage-managing the rehearsal for the mass wedding, which was to take place two days later. In attendance were ten affianced couples (they were chosen after submitting to phone interviews and home visits by Reid), their parents, siblings, best men, and maids of honor, and their children, who ranged in age from fourteen months to sixteen years.

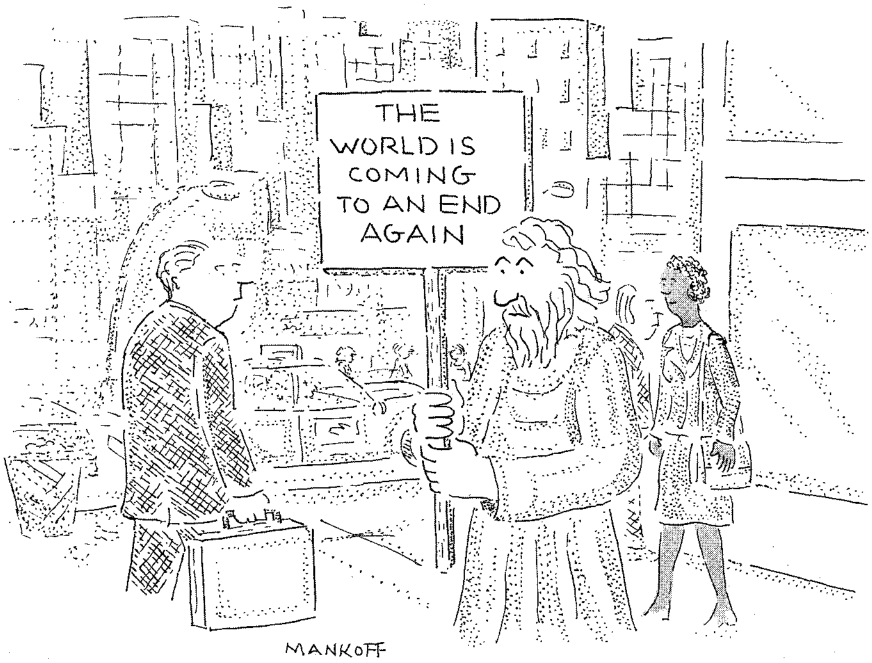
To finance the festivities, Reid had solicited donations: ten gowns, veils, and headpieces; ten wedding cakes, by Fort Greene’s Cake Man Raven; twenty bouquets; three hundred invitations; fifty bottles of champagne; and one reception hall (the Brooklyn Borough Hall rotunda). The gowns were particularly appreciated. “Seeing the dress on me made me really emotional,” one bride said, recalling her fitting. “I was hyperventilating. They were running around getting me water. I was holding on to the footstool.” Most crucial, Reid had secured the assistance of the House of the Lord’s Reverend Doctor Herbert Daughtry, who would counsel and marry the couples, and of a professional wedding planner, Patricia Washington. “When she first came to me and said ‘Ten brides,’ I was, like, ‘Ten brides, all at once? Hell no!’ ” Washington recalled.

As the grooms trickled into the sanctuary (they had been trying on tuxedos in the basement), Reid and Washington approached the pulpit. “Now, about marriage certificates,” Washington said. “Raise your hand if you still need to have your marriage certificate signed. Don’t be shy.” A pair of hands went up.

An organist launched into “Love and Happiness,” by Al Green, and the rehearsal got under way. (The ceremony would also feature a couple of original compositions: “Today I Married My Baby’s Daddy” and “Never as Sure.”) It had been previously determined that the grooms should dance down the aisle, but they were shuffling halfheartedly. “While you’re walking in, you’ve got to feel the music!” Washington shouted. “This kept me up at night, trying to get them to walk so that it wasn’t looking like a circus,” she said. Next came the children: some ran, some squealed, the smallest were pulled or carried down the aisle by siblings and grandparents. On their heels were ten best men and ten maids of honor, all of whom were promptly seated. At last, the brides joined their grooms, in a scattered formation at the altar. The choreography brought to mind the finale of a Shakespearean comedy.

Reid stood back, admiring the scene. “I had to keep these couples focussed for eight months,” she said. “People break up. People change their minds. There were some close calls.” Meanwhile, Washington was winding up a dizzying unity-candle sequence involving all twenty brides and grooms and two large candelabras. “You’ve got to hold each other when y’all walk,” she instructed one candle-carrying couple. “Hold each other. Take your time.”

—*Kate Julian*


THE WORLD IS COMING TO AN END AGAIN
MANKOFF

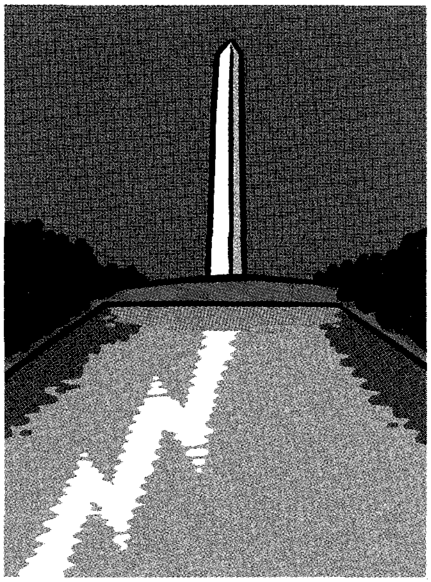
# THE FINANCIAL PAGE
# CAPITOL GAINS

Earlier this year, Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist told the trustee in charge of managing his stock portfolio to sell all of his shares in Hospital Corporation of America, the giant company founded by the Senator's father and brother. Just two weeks after the shares were sold, H.C.A. announced that its earnings would not meet Wall Street expectations, and the company's stock price tumbled almost nine per cent. Frist, it happened, had got out pretty much at the top, and his continued connections to H.C.A.—his brother, for instance, is on the company's board of directors—raised the possibility that he'd been tipped off.

Frist is now the target of a probe by the Securities and Exchange Commission, although he insists that he did nothing wrong, and that he sold the shares to defuse concerns about potential conflicts of interest. Frist's colleagues in the Senate, meanwhile, have remained noticeably quiet about the affair. Perhaps that's because he's far from the only senator to demonstrate uncanny investing smarts. Last year, Alan Ziobrowski, a professor at Georgia State, headed the first-ever systematic study of politicians as investors. Ziobrowski and his colleagues looked at six thousand stock transactions made by senators between 1993 and 1998. Over that time, senators beat the market, on average, by twelve per cent annually. Since a mutual-fund manager who beats the market by two or three per cent a year is considered a genius, the politicians' ability to foresee the future seems practically divine. They did an especially good job of picking up stocks at just the right time; their buys were typically flat before they bought them, but beat the market by thirty per cent, on average, in the year after. By those standards, Frist actually looks like a bit of a piker.

Are senators really that smart? The authors of the study suggest a more likely explanation: at least some senators must have been trading "based on information that is unavailable to the public"—in other words, they were engaged in some form of insider trading. It's impossible to pin down exactly how it happened, but it's easy to imagine senators getting occasional stock tips from corporate supplicants, and their own work in Congress often deals with confidential matters that have a direct impact on particular companies.

That the senators have done this without a hint of censure shouldn't come as a surprise. Corporate insider trading is illegal, in theory, but prosecutions are rare. Economists have known for a long time that corporate insiders outperform the market by something like six or seven per cent a year. The only way they could pull that off is by trading on privileged information. And some people think that's as it should be. Beginning in the nineteen-sixties, when Henry Manne published "Insider Trading and the Stock Market," many theorists have argued that insider trading is a victimless offense, or even a positive good. After all, some investors always have better information than others, and if a well-informed trader didn't have the incentive of trading on what he knew the stock market would dry up. Furthermore, since insider trading is, by definition, based on accurate information, it moves stock prices in the right direction. Isn't this just market efficiency in action?



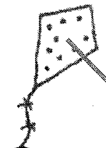
Not really. Ultimately, insider trading is an inefficient way of achieving market efficiency, because insiders earn all their profits on the lag between when they start selling and when the market figures out what's going on. This gives them every reason to hoard information, with the result that stock prices are out of whack for longer than they otherwise would have been. Markets thrive on transparency, but insider trading thrives on opacity.

Insider trading therefore encourages executives to put their own interests before those of their shareholders. In fact, the real scandal of insider trading is not what's illegal but what's legal. For instance, although many companies have a rule that their employees can buy or sell company stock only during preordained periods, known as "trading windows," they don't need to announce in advance if they're going to buy or sell during a window. So executives who get bad news can still dump shares relatively freely (or, if they get wind of good news, buy freely). They also have an incentive to delay disclosing news until after they've bought or sold all they can. Alan Jagolinzer, an accounting professor at Stanford, has shown that the stocks sold by insiders tend to drop after the sales go through, and a *Financial Times* study of the twenty-five biggest bankruptcies in the wake of the stock-market crash found that executives and directors in those firms collectively unloaded almost three billion dollars of stock even as their companies headed to oblivion. (The corporate insiders at H.C.A. managed, perhaps quite legally, to dump more than a hundred million dollars in H.C.A. stock in the six months before it cratered.)

There are relatively simple ways to reduce some of this activity—for instance, requiring that insiders disclose in advance when they plan to trade and how much they plan to buy or sell. But ultimately we don't seem all that interested in doing much about it, unless someone sails too close to the wind too publicly—or you're Martha Stewart. Perhaps we want to keep the insider's advantage intact because we all want to be inside. The choice is between a system in which people get rewarded for the work they do and a system in which people get rewarded for who they know or for what they're lucky enough to stumble into. And in Washington today that's no choice at all.

—*James Surowiecki*

# Don't wait to live your life.



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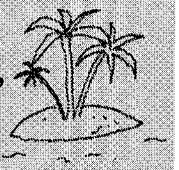

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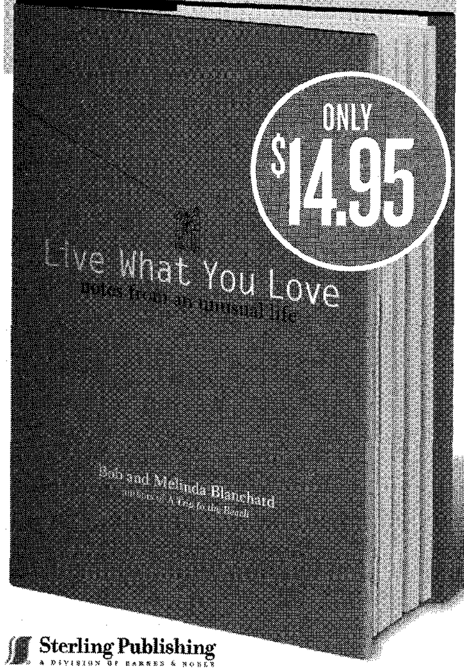
- Work and live in a **place** you love—you'll be spending lots of time there.
- Your dream scenario must be able to generate enough **money** to make the first three checkpoints possible.



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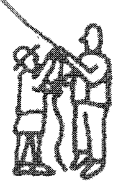

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### ANNALS OF LAW

# BREYER'S BIG IDEA

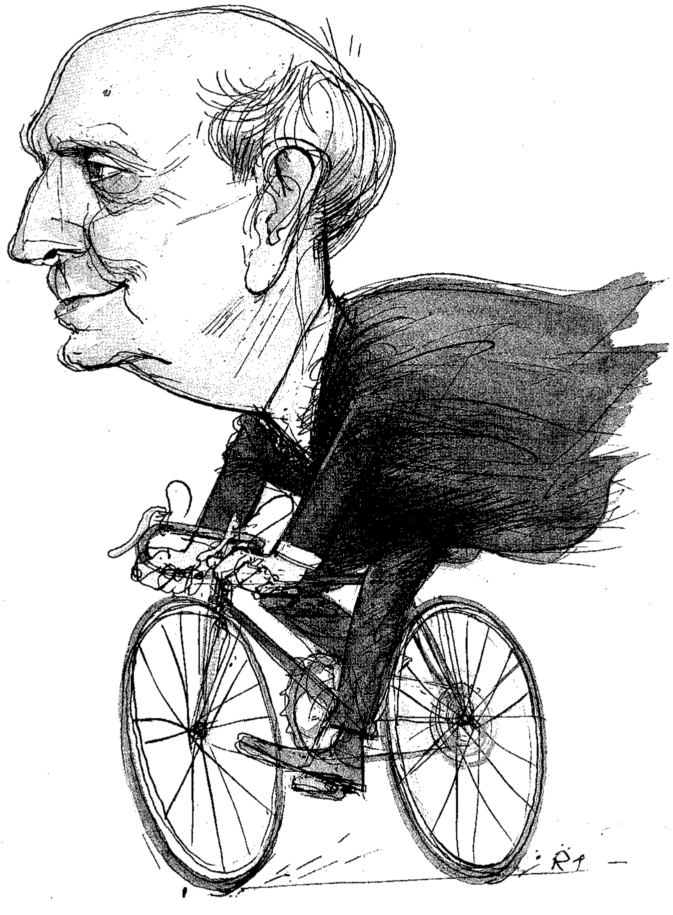
*The Justice's vision for a progressive revival on the Supreme Court.*

### BY JEFFREY TOOBIN

In the weeks after the Supreme Court issued its decision in Bush v. Gore, on December 12, 2000, the mood was despondent in the chambers of the Justices on the losing side. The five-to-four ruling ended the recount of the Presidential vote in Florida and assured George W. Bush's victory in the election. "The clerks were tremendously alienated," one recalled recently. "A lot of them thought that the Court was a fraud, that the place had sacrificed its legitimacy, and that there really wasn't much point in taking the whole institution seriously anymore."

Stephen G. Breyer was among the dissenting Justices in the case. He was appointed to the Supreme Court by President Clinton in 1994, but his main residence is still a rambling clapboard house in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which he and his British-born wife, Joanna, bought three decades ago, early in his career as a professor at Harvard Law School. The house is on a cul-de-sac not far from Brattle Street, which has been home to the city's gentry since the American Revolution. Breyer works in the back of the house, in a sunny, glassed-in office, surrounded by paintings and leather-bound books.

One morning a few weeks ago, Breyer, who is sixty-seven, sat in his office in a worn wing chair, relating how he had tried to reassure the clerks. "I spent a long time going to lunch with quite a few of them, to calm them down," he said. "I told them, 'This, too, will pass.' " Breyer said that the pep talks were intended to help keep the young lawyers motivated, but they also reflected his fundamentally optimistic nature. "You have to assume good faith, even on the part of people with whom you disagree," he told me. "If you don't assume good faith, it makes matters personal, and it makes it harder to reach a good result and, in my experience, it normally isn't even true. People do act in good faith. The best clue to what a person thinks is what he says."



*Breyer believes that the Court should stay out of Congress's way.*

RICHARD THOMPSON

Breyer's confidence in the Supreme Court isn't shared by many Democratic lawyers and judges. After his appointment, membership on the Court remained stable for eleven years—the longest period without turnover in more than a hundred and fifty years. But now John G. Roberts, Jr., has replaced William H. Rehnquist as Chief Justice, and Bush has nominated Harriet Miers, his White House counsel, to fill the seat vacated by Sandra Day O'Connor. Furthermore, Breyer's most liberal colleagues, John Paul Stevens and Ruth Bader Ginsburg, are eighty-five and seventy-two years old, respectively. A period of conservative hegemony on the Court seems a real possibility. In April, the Harvard Law School professor and veteran Supreme Court litigator Laurence H. Tribe announced that he would not complete a new edition of his mammoth treatise on constitutional law, which was originally published in 1978, because so many precedents that had once seemed settled now appear at risk of being overruled. "I've suspended work on a revision because, in area after area, we find ourselves at a fork in the road . . . and because conflict over basic constitutional premises is today at a fever pitch," Tribe wrote in a letter to Breyer, an old friend and former colleague.

In September, Breyer published "Active Liberty: Interpreting Our Democratic Constitution," a manifesto for a progressive revival in American jurisprudence. The book, which is a hundred and sixty-one pages long, was inspired in part by Breyer's disdain for the method of constitutional interpretation championed by his principal ideological rivals on the Court, Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas. Their approach, known as originalism or textualism, holds that the words of the Constitution mean only what the framers understood by them; the document's sense does not evolve over time. Constitutional scholars on both the left and the right have criticized originalism for being overly literal and doctrinaire, but Breyer is the first Justice to attempt to elaborate simultaneously a rebuttal and an alternative.

In "Active Liberty," Breyer argues that the framers never intended for future generations of jurists to resolve contemporary controversies by guessing how the framers themselves would have resolved them. Instead, their goal was to promote what

Breyer, quoting the nineteenth-century French political writer Benjamin Constant, calls "active and constant participation in collective power"—in other words, "active liberty." The Constitution not only sets limits on official power, Breyer asserts; it insures the right of ordinary citizens to shape the workings of government. "There is this coherent view of the Constitution that has taken hold, called originalism, textualism, a kind of literalism, which is a well worked-out theory," Breyer told me. "And I think people are tempted to say that there is a coherent theory, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, there are simply judges who go around deciding each case as they think appropriate. And that isn't so. I think there is a more traditional approach, and it's coherent, consistent, and specific."

Several days after his book was published, Breyer visited a classroom at the New York University School of Law, where he took questions from students and engaged in a characteristic rhetorical technique: interviewing himself. Supreme Court Justices are known for their public reticence, but Breyer appears frequently before academic groups, from grade schools to law schools, and he plainly enjoys the give-and-take. Tall, thin, and nearly bald, he radiates nervous energy, rubbing his head as he puzzles over questions, and, in sessions at the Supreme Court, rocking in his leather chair—sometimes pitching so far forward that his chin almost rests on the bench. Breyer stays limber by bicycling around Cambridge and Georgetown, where he also has a home. (In 1993, when Breyer was a federal appeals-court judge in Boston, he had what is certainly the most famous bicycle accident in Supreme Court history. A few days before an interview with President Clinton for the vacancy on the Court created by Byron White's resignation, Breyer crashed while trying to avoid a pedestrian near his home in Cambridge, breaking a rib and puncturing a lung. He was in pain during the meeting with the President, and it didn't go well. Breyer was appointed the following year, after Harry Blackmun retired.)

"We get very open questions in constitutional law," Breyer said at N.Y.U. "So how do I react to them? Well, of course, you look at the text, the cases, the history, and all those things, but you can't escape your background, your own experiences. And I start with Lowell High School, Class of 1955. That doesn't mean a lot to you, but it means a lot to me."

Breyer mentions his public high school, in San Francisco, in nearly every speech. "In San Francisco in the nineteen-fifties, it was a wide-open time," he told me. "It's true that there were lots of people, mostly black people, who were still excluded from opportunities, but for the rest of us there was a sense of possibility that we've never seen before or since. You had a great mixing of classes. I was a hasher at Camp Mather, in the Sierras, which was run by the city and county of San Francisco. Anyone could go. You had a mix of the families of firemen, policemen, and doctors and lawyers. They all felt an obligation to be part of the community and to contribute to the community."

For forty years, Breyer's father worked as a lawyer for the San Francisco school system, eventually serving as a chief intermediary between the system's administrators and local politicians. His mother was a homemaker who volunteered with the Democratic Party and the League of Women Voters. Breyer's younger brother, Chuck, became a criminal-defense lawyer in San Francisco and, in 1997, was named a federal district judge by President Clinton. (Breyer recuses himself in appeals of his brother's rulings.)

"The message I'm trying to provide is that there is more to the Constitution than a Fourth of July speech," Breyer went on. "It was a serious objective of the framers that people participate in the political process. If people don't participate, the country can't work." In his book, he cites several recent Supreme Court opinions to illustrate his thesis. In the 2003 case McConnell v. Federal Election Commission, the Court had to assess the constitutionality of the 2002 McCain-Feingold campaign-finance law, and consider whether caps on campaign contributions, and restrictions on advertising, constituted infringements on the right to free speech, which is guaranteed by the First Amendment. Breyer (along with a majority of his colleagues) upheld most of the law's provisions. "To understand the First Amendment as seeking in significant part to protect active liberty, 'participatory self-

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government,' is to understand it as protecting more than the individual's modern freedom," he writes. "It is to understand the Amendment as seeking to facilitate a conversation among ordinary citizens that will encourage their informed participation in the electoral process."

In drafting the campaign-finance legislation, Congress had weighed the need for fair elections against the right to free speech, and fashioned a compromise. Paying deference to legislative judgments is a touchstone of Breyer's philosophy. "The need to make room for democratic decision-making argues for judicial modesty in constitutional decision-making, a form of judicial restraint," he writes. Neal Katyal, a professor at Georgetown University Law Center, who clerked for Breyer in the mid-nineties, says, "Every single day you spend with him, you hear about how the courts should trust the political branches. He trusts Congress a lot more than the left did in the sixties and seventies, and a lot more than the right does today." Indeed, according to an analysis by Paul Gewirtz, a professor at Yale Law School, and his student Chad Golder, of Supreme Court decisions between 1994 and 2005 addressing the constitutionality of sixty-four congressional provisions, Breyer voted to strike down laws twenty-eight per cent of the time—less often than any other Justice. Clarence Thomas voted to overrule Congress sixty-six per cent of the time, more than any other Justice.

Breyer's accommodating attitude toward Congress represents a departure from liberal judicial tradition. "William Brennan and Thurgood Marshall had a vision of the Constitution as having these big ideals of equality and liberty which would require renovation of many social practices, so that they would require the criminal-justice system, or welfare, or education all be changed in significant ways to conform to their aspirations," Cass Sunstein, a professor at the University of Chicago Law School and an admirer of Breyer's work, says. "You can't see any of that in Breyer. There is nothing in Breyer to show that he thinks there are many areas where the Constitution is properly used to renovate American society, no indication that he wants to move society or constitutional law in novel directions. Today, it's the conservatives who want to use the law to make big changes in American society."

For more than fifty years, starting with the New Deal, the Supreme Court gave Congress considerable leeway to pass laws, under the authority granted to it by the Constitution to regulate interstate commerce. In the nineteen-nineties, however, the Court—led by the conservative Justices Rehnquist, Scalia, and Thomas—began to challenge congressional statutes in an effort to limit the power of the federal government. In 1995, in United States v. Lopez, a five-Justice majority ruled that Congress lacked the authority to pass a federal law banning the possession of guns in a school zone. On similar grounds, in 2000, the Court struck down, in another five-to-four vote, a provision of the federal Violence Against Women Act which gave victims of sex-related violence the right to sue their attackers in federal court.

Breyer dissented in both cases, arguing, in his opinion in Lopez, that "the statute falls well within the scope of the commerce power as this Court has understood that power over the last half-century." The cases exemplify the conflict between originalism and the more pragmatic approach advocated by Breyer, and the outcome of this conflict has enormous implications for American government. Scalia and Thomas would like to see the federal government's role in regulating citizens' lives reduced to the modest one that they believe the framers envisaged. As Thomas put it in his concurring opinion in Lopez, "The Founding Fathers confirmed that most areas of life (even many matters that would have substantial effects on commerce) would remain outside the reach of the Federal Government." Breyer believes that, whenever possible, the Court should stay out of Congress's way.

When I visited Breyer in Cambridge, there was a tidy pile of children's toys on the living-room floor, the residue of a recent visit by his oldest grandchild. "My daughter told me she didn't want me to be buying toys all the time for my grandchildren, and I said fine," Breyer said. "So these are my toys," he added, with the triumphant smile of a lawyer deploying a winning argument. "I bought them for myself."

Breyer's optimism on the bench may be partly congenital, but he owes his faith in Congress to his experience as a young lawyer on the Senate Judiciary Committee staff. After graduating from Stanford, in 1959, he studied philosophy and economics at Oxford on a Marshall Scholarship, and earned a law degree at Harvard, where he made the law review. From 1964 to 1965, he clerked for Justice Arthur Goldberg. The liberal Warren Court was near its apogee, and Breyer worked on Griswold v. Connecticut, the case in which the Justices overturned the state's ban on contraception and began articulating the right to privacy which led, eight years later, to Roe v. Wade. However, Breyer gravitated to antitrust and administrative law, and after a brief stint as an attorney in the antitrust division of the Justice Department he was hired to teach at Harvard.

While Breyer was working in the capital, he met and married Joanna Hare, an assistant in the Washington office of the London *Sunday Times*. Hare comes from an aristocratic British family; her father, John Hare, was the First Viscount Blakenham, a peer and statesman who served as a leader of the Tory Party in the nineteen-fifties and sixties. She later became a psychologist, and now treats young cancer patients at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, in Boston. One of the few modern works of art in the Breyers' home in Cambridge is a striking painting of their three children, Chloe, Nell, and Michael, who are now adults.

"That's Chloe, my oldest daughter," Breyer said as we stood in front of the painting. "She's an Episcopal priest, of all things. And I'm Jewish! So you can see we are very ecumenical around here." (Nell is a video artist; Michael is an aspiring software entrepreneur.)

In the mid-seventies, Breyer began commuting from Harvard to Washington to work as a counsel for the Judiciary Committee, then chaired by Senator Edward M. Kennedy. "When Steve came to work for me, he was advised that this was a disaster in terms of a career," Kennedy told me. "Everyone told him that if he wanted experience in government he should go to the executive branch. You don't really get your hands dirty in the executive branch. I wish I could walk into the Harvard Faculty

*"I don't know. What do* you *want to do?"*

• •

Club with him today and see what they think of their advice now." When Kennedy was preparing to challenge Jimmy Carter for the 1980 Democratic Presidential nomination, Breyer encouraged him to embrace a cause that moderated the Senator's image as a doctrinaire liberal: deregulation—of the airlines, trucking, and the natural-gas industry. "Steve started talking in the most common-sense way about getting the federal government out of the way of economic competition, and we held a series of very successful hearings on the subject," Kennedy said.

Breyer's support for deregulation, and his genial demeanor, earned him the admiration of several Republicans on the committee. "He was a really decent and honorable person," Senator Orrin G. Hatch, the Utah Republican, told me. "He worked with both sides and tried to bring everyone together." Eventually, Breyer became Kennedy's chief counsel on the committee, and under their direction it achieved considerable productivity and ideological harmony. Breyer left the committee in 1980, his childhood faith in civic participation intact. "It leads a person who works there to see that most politicians are trying to achieve results that will benefit the people who elected them," Breyer said of his experience as a congressional staffer. "Contrary to what people who haven't worked there might expect, they really are mostly trying to do the right thing."

Deference to Congress, a technocrat's belief in governmental solutions, and a taste for compromise have all figured in Breyer's jurisprudence. His book, however, provides few guidelines for applying his theory of active liberty to actual cases. Even if one accepts his assertion that the Constitution was designed to guarantee broad participation in the democratic process, the notion doesn't help lawyers and judges who are trying to adjudicate cases involving some of the most contested issues in constitutional law—race, privacy, and religion. No controversy better illustrates the strengths and weaknesses of Breyer's approach than the two Ten Commandments cases, from earlier this year.

In separate cases, civil-liberties advocates challenged, as violations of the establishment clause of the First Amendment, two public displays of the Commandments, one in a pair of Kentucky courthouses, the other on the grounds of the Texas state capitol, in Austin. Four Justices (Stevens, O'Connor, David Souter, and Ginsburg) rejected both states' displays as violations of the Constitution's separation of church and state; four others (Rehnquist, Scalia, Anthony M. Kennedy, and Thomas) approved both states' displays. Only Breyer, the swing vote in both cases, saw a difference between the displays: he rejected the Commandments in the Kentucky courthouses and upheld the one in the Texas park.

In his opinion concurring in the judgment in the Texas case, Van Orden v. Perry, Breyer noted that "there was no single mechanical formula that can accurately draw the constitutional line in every case," and he proceeded to compare the history of the displays. The Texas Commandments, which are carved into a granite monument, had been donated to the state by the Fraternal Order of Eagles, a private civic (and primarily secular) organization, in 1961. Most important, Breyer argued, no one had complained about the structure, which is situated among sixteen other monuments and twenty-one historical markers, for decades. "Those forty years suggest more strongly than can any set of formulaic tests that few individuals, whatever their system of beliefs, are likely to have understood the monument as amounting, in any significantly detrimental way, to a government effort to favor a particular religious sect," Breyer wrote. By contrast, the displays in the Kentucky case, McCreary County v. A.C.L.U., had been placed on the walls of the courthouses by local officials, accompanied in one case by a Christian minister, in 1999, and had immediately become objects of controversy. In his opinion in the Texas case, Breyer wrote, "the short (and stormy) history of the [Kentucky] courthouse Commandments' displays demonstrates the substantially religious objectives of those who mounted them."

Together, Breyer's decisions suggest an ad-hoc attempt at political compromise as much as the application of legal principles. His opinions in the cases amount to a demand that politicians stop erecting provocative religious monuments, with the understanding that old ones can stay. Removing uncontroversial displays like the one in Texas could, he wrote, "create the very kind of religiously based divisiveness that the Establishment Clause seeks to avoid." Applying Breyer's ruling to cases involving similar issues isn't easy. In a decision last month excluding the words "under God" from the Pledge of Allegiance, Lawrence K.

Karlton, a federal judge in Sacramento, wrote that Breyer's method in the Commandments cases was "utterly standardless . . . leaving those of us who work in the vineyard without guidance."

Breyer smiled when I told him about Judge Karlton's complaint. "That's a problem for the person in question," he said. "What kind of guidance? There is a tremendous temptation to believe that a bright-line rule is guidance and the absence of a rule is not guidance, particularly in an area of the law that is subtle. But there is also common-law guidance, which is by example. The best example of how to behave is by example. It's true with children. It's one thing to tell them how to behave, but it's another to live your life in such a way that you show them. You teach by example. You don't go too far too fast. Sandra understood this."

In conversation, Breyer often invokes Sandra Day O'Connor, with whom he had a close relationship. A former Arizona state senator, she shared Breyer's inclination to defer to the legislative process. Mostly, though, Breyer and O'Connor shared a judicial disposition—pragmatic, improvisational—that distinguished them from their more rule-based colleagues, including Scalia and Ginsburg. Breyer likes to win cases, and O'Connor, the Court's swing vote, was a means to that end.

"I once complimented him on a dissent, and he held up four fingers with a wistful smile," Akhil Amar, a professor at Yale Law School, who clerked for Breyer on the federal Court of Appeals in the mid-eighties, says. "He only got four votes. Nino Scalia would rather be right than in the majority, but Breyer by temperament is someone who is going to find the center. He cultivated O'Connor in the way that Scalia drove her away."

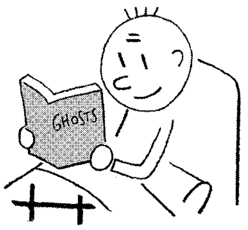
In his book, Breyer pays extended tribute to O'Connor's opinion in the 2003 case Grutter v. Bollinger, upholding the affirmative-action policy at the University of Michigan Law School. He discounts Ginsburg's traditional liberal rationale for affirmative action—that it's a remedy for past discrimination—in favor of O'Connor's view that preferences for minorities in university admissions guarantee diverse workplaces and leadership. Without affirmative action, Breyer writes, "too many individuals of all races would lack experience with a racially diverse educational environment helpful for their later effective participation in today's diverse civil society."

"Well, I was very sorry to see Justice O'Connor leave," Breyer told me in his study in Cambridge. "But life goes on."

The walls in Breyer's chambers at the Supreme Court are lined with hundreds of old books, remnants of a collection that belonged to his late uncle, Leo Roberts, an eccentric philosopher and freelance academic who haunted used-book sales. "He'd get me out there at five in the morning with him, to get first crack at them," Breyer told me. "He rarely spent more than a dollar for a book." On a wall beside the shelves are photographs of three previous occupants of his seat: Felix Frankfurter, Arthur Goldberg, and Harry Blackmun. For many years, it was known as the Court's "Jewish seat" (until it went to Blackmun, a Methodist). "If I could have told my grandfather that I was going to be on the Supreme Court, and I was going to be the second Jewish person on at the same time"—Ginsburg is also Jewish—"he definitely would have said I was lying," Breyer said.

Breyer has cordial relationships with all his colleagues on the Court, including his ideological adversaries. In "Active Liberty," he attacks originalism, asserting that there is no way of knowing precisely what the framers meant by such phrases as "freedom of speech" or "due process of law," much less how they would have applied those terms today. Scalia and Thomas's approach, he concludes, "has a tendency to undermine the Constitution's efforts to create a framework for democratic government—a government that, while protecting basic individual liberties, permits citizens to govern themselves, and to govern themselves effectively."

Yet Breyer sits next to Thomas on the bench, and they often whisper and laugh together during oral arguments. "Lots of times his colleagues will throw barbs at him in opinions, but he'll never say a bad word about them, in public or private," Neal Katyal says.



Breyer said, "It's a congenial and professional Court. In our conference, there are very contentious issues, and I've never heard a voice raised in anger in eleven years. And I have not heard people make slighting remarks about others, not even as a joke. I remember once, we were having lunch at one point and I said, 'Isn't it interesting, we've just come out of a conference where there were two five-to-four decisions. And the personnel were on different sides. And yet here we are having lunch, a pretty pleasant lunch at a time we are just absolutely at loggerheads.' "

To some extent, Breyer owes his judicial career to his reputation for bipartisanship. Kennedy told me that after he withdrew from the race for the Democratic Presidential nomination, in 1980, he recommended Breyer to President Carter, telling him, "Steve is someone very, very special, and I would like to see him nominated to the First Circuit." After Carter lost to Ronald Reagan, Kennedy pleaded with Strom Thurmond, then the senior Republican on the Judiciary Committee, to allow the Senate to confirm Breyer.

"Kennedy went to Thurmond after Reagan had won the election and asked him to give Breyer a vote," Hatch recalled. "And Strom said, 'No, we won the election.' So Kennedy came to me and said, 'Orrin, can you help me? I'd like to get Steve on the First Circuit.' And I said, 'Sure.' So I went to Strom and I said, 'This man had been a wonderful chief counsel for this committee. He's a member of the family, and we ought to send him through.' And Strom said, 'You think?' He was the last judge confirmed before Carter left office."

Breyer's respect for the political process does not mean that he exempts legislation from judicial scrutiny. He has sided with other liberals in several high-profile civil-liberties controversies, and in these cases he has overruled the decisions of political majorities. In a 2002 dissent in Zelman v. Simmons-Harris, he argued that a voucher system established by the state of Ohio to subsidize the education of children, including some in

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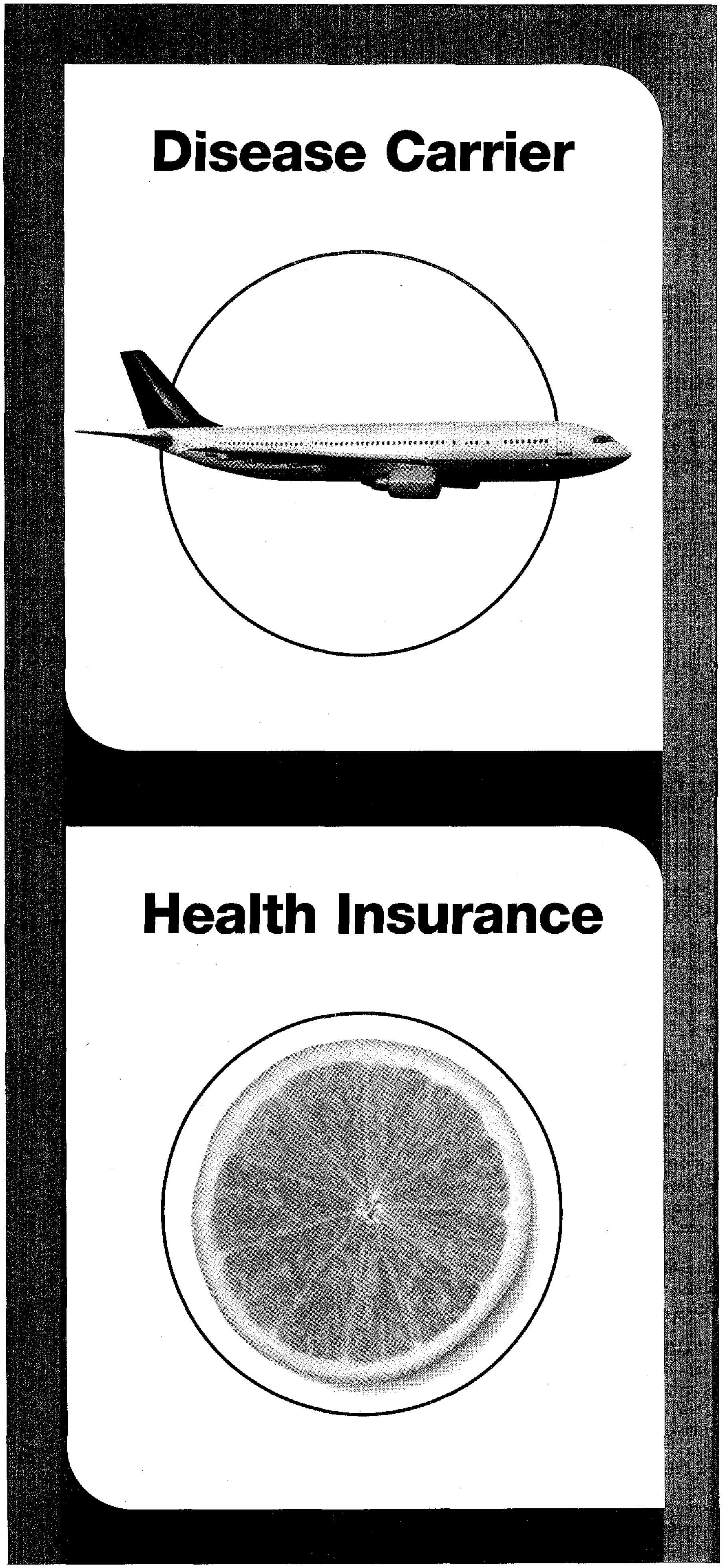


parochial schools, violated the establishment clause of the First Amendment, because, he wrote, the subsidy to religion invited "social conflict."

In 2000, in what may be his best-known opinion since joining the Court, Breyer ruled for a five-Justice majority in Stenberg v. Carhart that Nebraska's law banning late-term (or partial-birth) abortions violated the Constitution. "All those who perform abortion procedures using that method must fear prosecution, conviction, and imprisonment," Breyer wrote. "The result is an undue burden upon a woman's right to make an abortion decision. We must consequently find the statute unconstitutional."

So Breyer is a majoritarian—sometimes. "What is mysterious and really unexplained is what is the relationship between his embrace of democracy in his book and the vigorous enforcement, in which Justice Breyer has sometimes enthusiastically participated, of individual rights against majority decisions," says Charles Fried, a professor at Harvard Law School and a friend of Breyer's, who was a former Solicitor General in the Reagan Administration and frequently disagrees with his decisions. "It's not helpful to say that the dominant interpretive principle is to reinforce majority rule when a number of the most controversial constitutional doctrines, like abortion, are exactly designed to limit and counteract majority rule."

Breyer concedes that a judicial approach based on "active liberty" will not yield solutions to every constitutional debate. "Respecting the democratic process does not mean you abdicate your role of enforcing the limits in the Constitution, whether in the Bill of Rights or in separation of powers," he said. "We have to decide when these limits are exceeded. People tend to forget that when the limits are not exceeded. Almost everything the government does is within these limits. We have to give guidance. There is no absolute guidance, no absolute rules."

Nevertheless, the widespread dismay among Republicans that Harriet Miers, President Bush's choice to replace Sandra Day O'Connor, has not publicly embraced a conservative agenda suggests that there is a desire by some in Bush's party for absolute rules. In this context, Breyer's rosy outlook on the future of the

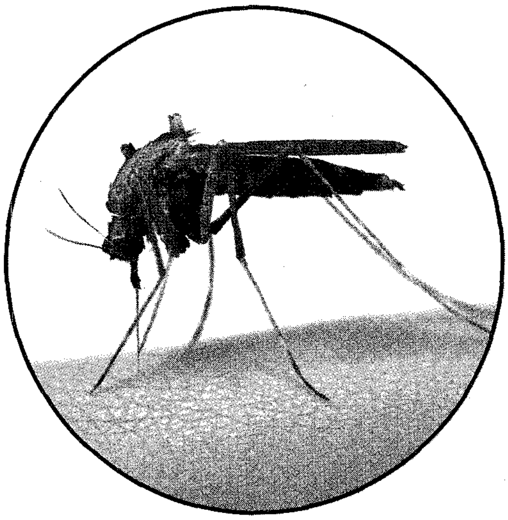
Court could seem naïve. Indeed, his opinion in the partial-birth-abortion case may be one of the first casualties of a new conservative majority on the Court. The five-Justice majority in Stenberg included O'Connor; her prospective replacement, Miers, has publicly endorsed anti-abortion positions. A case challenging a new federal ban on partial-birth abortion is almost certain to come before the Justices this term.

"Your opinions are not your children," Breyer told me. "What they are is your best effort in one case. The next one will come along, and you'll do your best. You'll learn from the past. [Justice] Goldberg taught me never to look backward. People ask all the time whether I was sorry that I was in the minority in Bush v. Gore. I say, 'Of course I was sorry!' I'm always sorry when I don't have a majority. But, if I started moping about it, I can hear Goldberg saying, 'What are you talking about, feeling sorry for yourself? There's no basis for feeling sorry for yourself. Get down and do it. Keep going. Maybe they didn't agree yesterday. Maybe they'll agree tomorrow.'

"One of the great things about our Court is that there are two rules which I love—not written-down rules, but ways of behaving," he went on. One involves the Justices' conference, at which they discuss their decisions and announce their votes in order of seniority. "The first rule, which I love because it works in my interest, is that nobody at conference speaks twice until everybody has spoken once. Great rule. Helps preserve the peace, and helps keep the junior Justice happy." Breyer's enthusiasm for the Justices' conference is understandable. Here, if nowhere else, his ideal of active liberty—a forum in which individual rights are protected and everyone participates—is realized.

The second rule, he said, is that "tomorrow is another day. No dependency of a decision of one case on another: You join me, I join you. None of that. None of that, zero. The coalitions float. Each one, each case, is a new day. Each day is a new day."

A couple of weeks later, as Breyer escorted me from his chambers, I asked him whether he knew the new Chief Justice, John Roberts. "I don't know him," he said, before adding quickly, "But I know it'll be fine." ♦



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### SHOUTS & MURMURS

# THE RETURN OF THE BUSH QUIZ

BY PAUL SLANSKY

1. Who is Ben Marble?

(a) The Pentagon official who said that George W. Bush's staged videoconference with U.S. troops in Iraq made him "livid."

(b) The Texas liquor-authority agent who arrested George W. Bush's intoxicated nephew John for resisting arrest.

(c) The former White House speechwriter who said that Harriet Miers, the Supreme Court nominee, told him that George W. Bush was the most brilliant man she'd ever met.

(d) The Gulfport, Mississippi, onlooker who twice interrupted Dick Cheney's conversation with reporters to tell Cheney, "Go fuck yourself."

2. True or false: During Sky News Ireland's coverage of George W. Bush's reaction to Hurricane Katrina, the network paraphrased his comments with the caption "BUSH: ONE OF THE WORST DISASTERS TO HIT THE U.S."

3. To what was George W. Bush referring when he said, "The best place for the facts to be done is by somebody who's spending time investigating it"?

(a) The investigation into Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist's stock sale.

(b) The investigation into the role of the White House aide Karl Rove in the Valerie Plame case.

(c) The indictment of House Majority Leader Tom DeLay on money-laundering charges.

(d) The indictment of the former Bush Administration budget official David Safavian on charges of lying and obstruction of justice.

4. What did Dick Cheney say when asked why he didn't cut his Wyoming fly-fishing vacation short until several days after Katrina hit New Orleans?

(a) "Go fuck yourself."

(b) "I didn't stop smoking until after my fourth heart attack, so some things take a while to sink in with me."

(c) "I came back four days early."

(d) "The trout were biting big-time."

Who said what about stranded flood victims?

5. Barbara Bush.

6. Wolf Blitzer.

7. Bill O'Reilly.

(a) "So many of the people in the arena here, you know, were underprivileged anyway. This is working *very* [*chuckling*] well for them."

(b) That many of them were "drug-addicted."

(c) "So many of these people, almost all of them that we see, are so poor, and they are so black."

8. While speaking to hurricane victims in Mississippi, Laura Bush twice mistakenly referred to the storm as:

(a) Catalina.
(b) Corina.
(c) Condoleezza.
(d) Karenina.

9. What was notable about the memo sent by FEMA's director, Michael Brown, to Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff hours after the flooding of New Orleans began?

(a) His repeated references to FEMA as the "Federal Emergency Management Association" instead of "Agency."

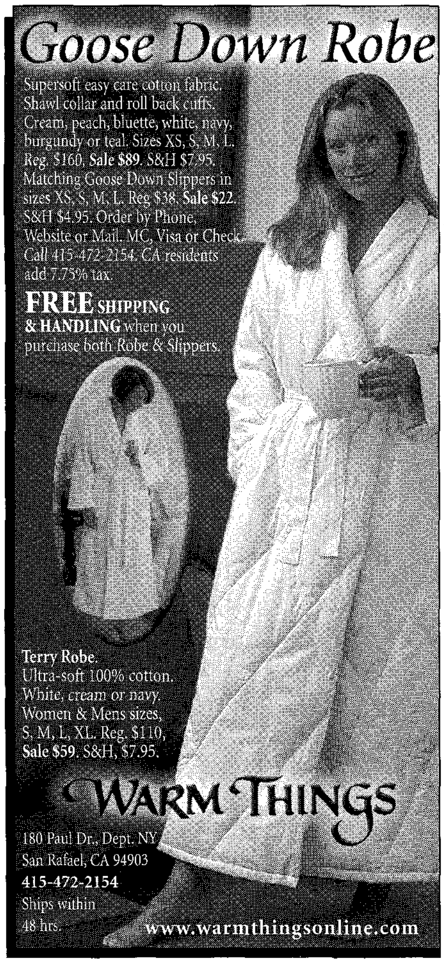
(b) The lack of urgency in his request that a thousand workers be sent to the region "within forty-eight hours," and his suggestion that those workers bring cash, because "A.T.M.s may not be working."

(c) His prediction that the disaster could be "just the thing" to lead an "already shaky" George W. Bush to start drinking again.

(d) His suggestion that the agency see about setting up "foster barns" for the region's Arabian horses.

10. Who is Norris Alderson?

(a) The Food and Drug Administra-



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tion official who resigned in protest of the agency's refusal to allow over-the-counter sales of the morning-after pill.

(b) The veterinarian with no experience on women's-health issues who was initially named to run the F.D.A.'s Office of Women's Health.

(c) The lawyer who was named to run the Immigration and Customs Enforcement agency despite having minimal experience in immigration, customs, or law enforcement.

(d) The Manhattan shopper who confronted Condoleezza Rice at Ferragamo, where she was spending thousands of dollars as the situation in New Orleans was deteriorating, and demanded, "How dare you shop for shoes while thousands are dying and homeless?"

11. Three of these statements were made by George W. Bush. Which one did Michael Chertoff make?

(a) "One of the things that people want us to do here is to play a blame game."

(b) "So please give cash money to organizations that are directly involved in helping save lives—save the life who had been affected by Hurricane Katrina."

(c) "Louisiana is a city that is largely underwater."

(d) "We look forward to hearing your vision, so we can more better do our job."

Who did what?

12. Senator Rick Santorum (R-Pa.).

13. Senator Mary Landrieu (D-La.).

14. Representative Charles Rangel (D-N.Y.).

15. Representative Richard Baker (R-La.).

16. Representative Tom DeLay (R-Texas).

17. Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.).

(a) Said that God "finally cleaned up public housing in New Orleans."

(b) Complained about the people who refused to evacuate, and suggested that "there may be a need to look at tougher penalties on those who decide to ride it out and understand that there are consequences to not leaving."

(c) Said of Dick Cheney, "I would like to believe he's sick rather than just mean and evil."

(d) Said that if anyone, including George W. Bush, spoke another word trying to blame local officials for the magnitude of the disaster, "I might likely have to punch him. Literally."

(e) Approached three newly homeless children in the Astrodome and said, "Now, tell me the truth, boys, is this kind of fun?"

(f) Said of George W. Bush's photo op in San Diego as New Orleans flooded, "The President was enjoying the day; he was strumming a guitar. I don't deny him the pleasures of office, but people were drowning."

18. What did George W. Bush say to reassure people about Harriet Miers?

(a) "She's the most brilliant woman I've ever met."

(b) "She's got the best heart of anyone I know, just a super heart."

(c) "She helped hide the bodies in my National Guard record."

(d) "She is plenty bright."

19. What prompted George W. Bush's response "I've got a life to live, and will do so"?

(a) A question about the propriety of taking a five-week vacation when U.S. soldiers were dying in Iraq.

(b) A question about why he was out bike-riding instead of talking to the war protester Cindy Sheehan.

(c) A question about why he flew to California instead of Louisiana after he heard about the New Orleans flooding.

(d) A question about the propriety of wasting so much fuel on trips to New Orleans that had no purpose but to make the public think he was in charge.

20. What did George W. Bush say that the government had to do in response to the New Orleans flooding?

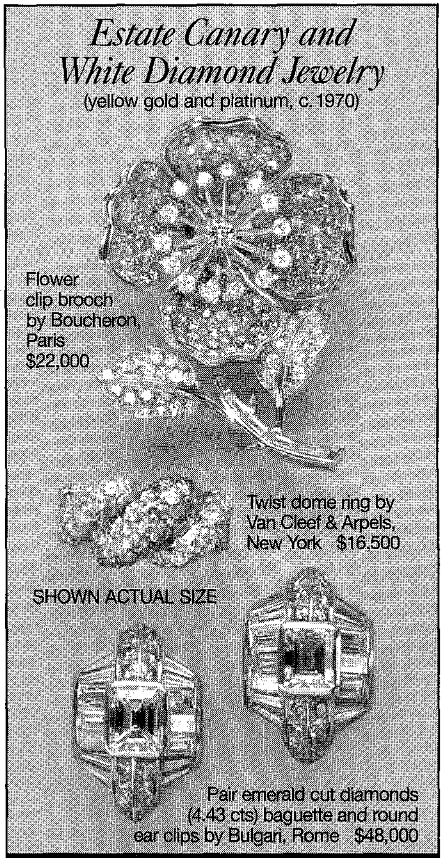
(a) "We've got to solve problems. We're problem-solvers."

(b) "We've got to do the work. We're work-doers."

(c) "We've got to fire Brownie. We're Brownie-firers."

(d) "We've got to get rid of that water. We're water-getter-ridders. Of."

Answers:
(1) d, (2) True, (3) b, (4) c, (5) a, (6) c, (7) b,
(8) b, (9) b, (10) b, (11) c, (12) b, (13) d, (14) c,
(15) a, (16) c, (17) f, (18) d, (19) b, (20) a.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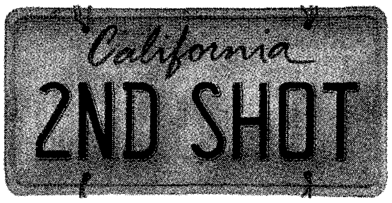

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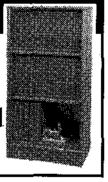
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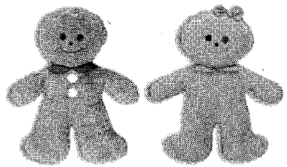

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A NEUROLOGIST'S NOTEBOOK

# RECALLED TO LIFE

*When patients suffer a loss of language, must they also lose their sense of self?*

BY OLIVER SACKS

Patricia H. was a brilliant and energetic woman who represented artists and ran an art gallery on Long Island, and was a talented amateur painter herself. She had raised her three children, and, nearing sixty, she continued to lead an active and even, as her daughters put it, "glamorous" life, with scouting expeditions to the Village and frequent soirées at home—she was a great cook, and there would often be twenty people for dinner. Her husband, too, was a man of many parts—a radio broadcaster, a fine pianist who sometimes performed at night clubs, and politically active. Both were intensely sociable.

In 1989, however, Pat's husband died suddenly, of a heart attack. Pat herself had had open-heart surgery for a damaged valve the year before, and had been put on anticoagulants. She had taken this in stride—but now, with her husband's death, as one of her daughters put it, "She seemed stunned, became very depressed, lost weight, fell in the subway, had accidents with the car, and would show up, as if lost, on our doorstep in Manhattan." Pat had always been somewhat volatile in mood ("She would be depressed for a few days and take to her bed, then leap up in an opposite frame of mind, and rush into the city, a thousand engagements of one sort and another"), but now a fixed melancholy descended on her.

When, in January of 1991, she didn't answer her phone for two days, her daughters became alarmed and called a neighbor, who, with the Long Island police, broke into Pat's house to find her lying in bed unconscious. She had been in a coma for at least twenty hours, the daughters were told, and had suffered a massive cerebral hemorrhage. There was a huge clot of blood in the left half of her brain, the dominant hemisphere, and it was thought that she would not survive.

After a week in the hospital with no improvement, Pat underwent surgery as a last-ditch measure. The results of this, her daughters were told, could not be predicted.

Indeed, it seemed at first, after the clot was removed, that the situation was dire. Pat would "stare . . . without seeming to see," according to one of her daughters. "Sometimes her eyes would follow me, or seem to. We didn't know what was going on, whether she was there." Neurologists sometimes speak of "chronic vegetative states," zombie-like conditions in which certain primitive reflexes are preserved, but no coherent consciousness or self. Such states can be cruelly tantalizing, for there is often the feeling that the person is about to come to—but the states may last for months or years. In Pat's case, though, it lasted for two weeks and then, as her daughter Lari recalled, "I had a Diet Coke in my hand—she wanted it. I saw her eye it. I asked, 'Do you want a sip?' She nodded. Everything changed at this moment."

Pat was conscious now, recognized her daughters, was aware of her condition and her surroundings. She had her appetites, her desires, her personality, but she was paralyzed on the right side, and, more gravely, she could no longer express her thoughts and feelings in words; she could only eye and mime, point or gesture. Her understanding of speech, too, was much impaired. She was, as neurologists say, aphasic.

"Aphasia" means, literally, a loss of speech, but it is not speech as such which is lost but language itself—its expression, or its comprehension, in whole or in part. (Thus congenitally deaf people who use sign language rather than speech may get a sign aphasia following a brain injury or stroke, an aphasia in every way analogous to the aphasia of speaking people.)

Aphasia is not uncommon—it has

been estimated that one person in three hundred may have a lasting aphasia from brain damage, whether this be the consequence of a stroke, a head injury, a tumor, etc. Many people, however, have a complete or partial recovery from aphasia, and there are transient forms that may occur during a migraine or a seizure.

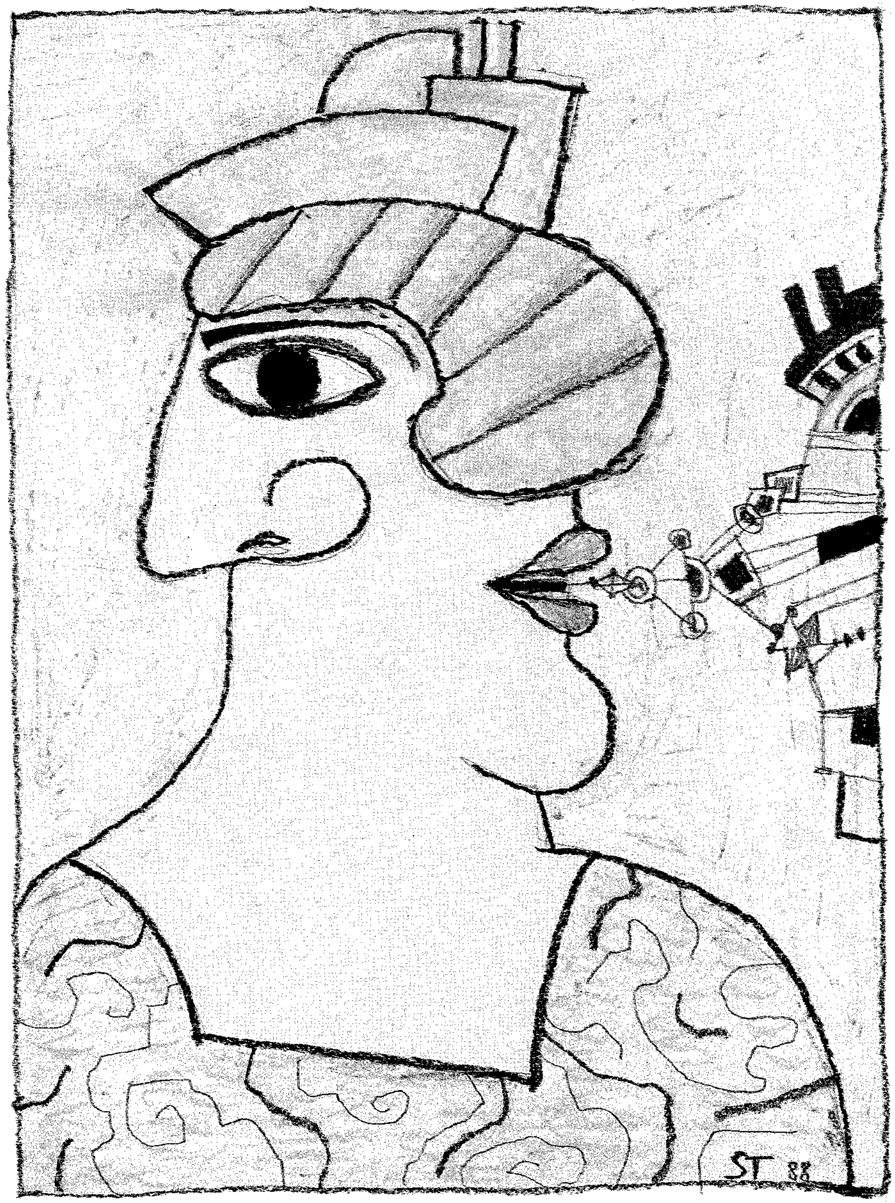
There are many different forms of aphasia, depending on which part of the brain is involved, and a broad distinction is usually made between expressive aphasias and receptive aphasias—if both are present, this is a "global" aphasia.

In its mildest forms, expressive aphasia is characterized by a difficulty finding words, or a tendency to use wrong words, without compromise of the overall structure of sentences.

In more severe forms, a person may be unable to generate full, grammatically correct sentences, and may be able to utter only isolated words ("telegraphic speech"); if the aphasia is very severe, the person may be all but mute, though capable of occasional emotional ejaculations (such as "Damn!" or "Fine!"). John Hughlings Jackson, a pioneer explorer of aphasia in the eighteen-sixties and seventies, considered that such patients lacked "propositional" speech, and he thought that they had lost internal speech as well, so that they could not speak or "propositionize" even to themselves. He felt therefore that the power of abstract thought was lost in aphasia, and on occasion he compared aphasics to dogs.

Scott Moss, a psychologist who had a stroke when he was forty-three which rendered him aphasic and paralyzed on the right side, later described his experiences, which were very much in accord with Hughlings Jackson's notions about the loss of inner speech and concepts:

> When I awoke the next morning in the hospital, I was totally (globally) aphasic. I could understand vaguely what others said to me if it was spoken slowly and represented a very concrete form of action. . . . I had lost completely the ability to talk, to read and to write. I even lost for the first two months the ability to use words internally, that is, in my thinking. . . . I had also lost the ability to dream. So, for a matter of eight to nine weeks, I lived in a total vacuum of self-produced concepts. . . . I could deal only with the immediate present. . . . The part of myself that was missing was [the] intellectual aspect—the sine qua non of my personality—those essential elements most important to being a unique individual. . . . For a long period of time I looked upon myself as only half a man.



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But it was very different with Jacques Lordat, an eminent early-nineteenth-century French physiologist, who provided an extraordinary description of his own aphasia after a stroke, sixty-odd years before Hughlings Jackson's studies:

> Within twenty-four hours all but a few words eluded my grasp. Those that did remain proved to be nearly useless, for I could no longer recall the way in which they had to be coordinated for the communication of ideas. . . . I was no longer able to grasp the ideas of others, for the very amnesia that prevented me from speaking made me incapable of understanding the sounds I heard quickly enough to grasp their meaning. . . . Inwardly, I felt the same as ever. This mental isolation which I mention, my sadness, my impediment and the appearance of stupidity which it gave rise to, led many to believe that my intellectual faculties were weakened. . . .
>
> I used to discuss within myself my life work and the studies I loved. Thinking caused me no difficulty whatever. . . . My memory for facts, principles, dogmas, abstract ideas, was the same as when I enjoyed good health. . . . I had to realize that the inner workings of the mind could dispense with words.

Thus in some patients, even if they are totally unable to speak or understand speech, there may be perfect preservation of intellectual powers—the power to think logically and systematically, to plan, to recollect, to anticipate, to conjecture. This was shown, too, with great clarity in the case of a patient who was referred to by his physicians only as Brother John, a monk who would become completely aphasic for several minutes in the course of his epileptic seizures. But even when wholly deprived of language or internal speech Brother John was able to tackle complex problems, to negotiate intricate social situations, to show all the characteristic powers of a human being other than language. Had Hughlings Jackson met Brother John, one feels, he could not have compared aphasics to dogs.

Nevertheless, a feeling remains in the popular mind, and all too often in the medical mind, too, that aphasia is a sort of ultimate disaster, which, in effect, ends a person's inner life as well as her outer life. Something along these lines was said to Pat's daughters, Dana and Lari. A little improvement, the neurologists felt, might occur, but Pat would need to be institutionalized for the rest of her life; there would be no parties, no conversation, no art galleries anymore—all that had constituted the very essence of Pat's life would be gone, and she would lead the narrow life of a patient, an inmate.

Scarcely able to initiate conversation or contact with others, patients with aphasia face special dangers in chronic hospitals or nursing homes. They may have therapy of every sort, but a vital social dimension of their lives is missing, and aphasics frequently feel intensely isolated and cut off. Yet there are many activities—card games, shopping trips, movies or theatre, dance or sports—that do not require language, and these can be used to draw or inveigle aphasics into a social world of familiar activities and human contact. The dull term "social rehabilitation" is sometimes used here, but really the patient (as Dickens would put it) is being "recalled to life."

Pat's daughters were determined to do everything they could to bring their mother "back into the world," to the fullest possible life her limitations allowed. "We hired a nurse who retaught my mother how to feed herself, how to *be*," Lari said. "Mother would get angry, sometimes strike her, but she, the nurse, would never give up. Dana and I never left her side. We would take her out, wheel her to my apartment. . . . We would take her out to restaurants, or bring food in, have her hair done, her nails manicured. . . . We never stopped."

Pat was moved from the acute hospital where she had had surgery to a rehabilitation facility, and, after six months, she was finally moved to Beth Abraham hospital, in the Bronx, where I first met her.

## HEARD WHISPERS

The spider sways in October winds; she hears the whisk
Of the bat's foot as it leaves the branch, the groan
The bear makes far out on the Labrador ice,
The cry of the wren as the hurricane takes
The house, the cones falling, the sigh of the nun
As she dies, the whisper Jesus makes to
The woman drawing water, the nearly silent weeping
Of bones eager to be laid away in the grave.

—*Robert Bly*

When Beth Abraham hospital was opened, in 1919, it was called Beth Abraham Home for Incurables, a discouraging name that was changed only in the nineteen-sixties. Originally accommodating some of the first victims of the encephalitis-lethargica epidemic (some of whom were still living there more than forty years later, when I arrived), Beth Abraham expanded over the years to become a five-hundred-bed hospital with active rehabilitation programs, aimed at helping patients with all sorts of chronic conditions: parkinsonism, dementias, speech problems, multiple sclerosis, strokes (and, increasingly, traumatic damage from bullet wounds and car accidents).

Visitors to hospitals for the chronically ill are often horrified at first, at the sight of hundreds of "incurable" patients, many of them paralyzed, blind, or speechless. One's first thought is often: Is life worth living in circumstances like these? What sort of a life can these people have? One wonders, nervously, how one would react to the prospect of being disabled and entering such a home oneself.

Then one may start to see the other side. Even if no cure, or only limited improvement, is possible for most of these patients, many of them may nonetheless be helped to reconstruct their lives, to find other ways of doing things, capitalizing on their strengths, finding compensations and accommodations of every sort. This, of course, depends upon the degree and type of neurological damage, and upon the inner and outer resources of the individual patient.

But if the first sight of a chronic hospital can be hard for visitors, it can be terrifying for a new inmate, who often reacts with horror, mixed with sadness, bitterness, or rage. When I first saw Pat, shortly after her admission to Beth Abraham in October of 1991, I found her angry and frustrated. She did not yet know the staff, or the layout of the place, and she felt that a rigid, institutional order was being imposed on her. She could communicate through gestures—these were passionate, if not always understandable—but she still had very little speech (at least of grammatical sentences; she would occasionally, the staff said, exclaim "Hell!" or "Go away!" when she was angry). While she seemed to understand a good deal of what people said to her, it became clear, on examination, that she was responding not to words but to the tone of voice, facial expression, and gestures.

When I tested her in the clinic, Pat could not respond to "Touch your nose," either in speech or in writing. She could count ("one, two, three, four, five . . .") in sequence, but could not say individual numbers or count backward. The right side of her body remained completely paralyzed. Her neurological situation, I noted in my report, was "a bad one. I fear there may not be too much recovery of language functions, but intensive speech therapy, as well as physical therapy and occupational therapy, must certainly be tried."

Pat yearned to speak, but was contin-

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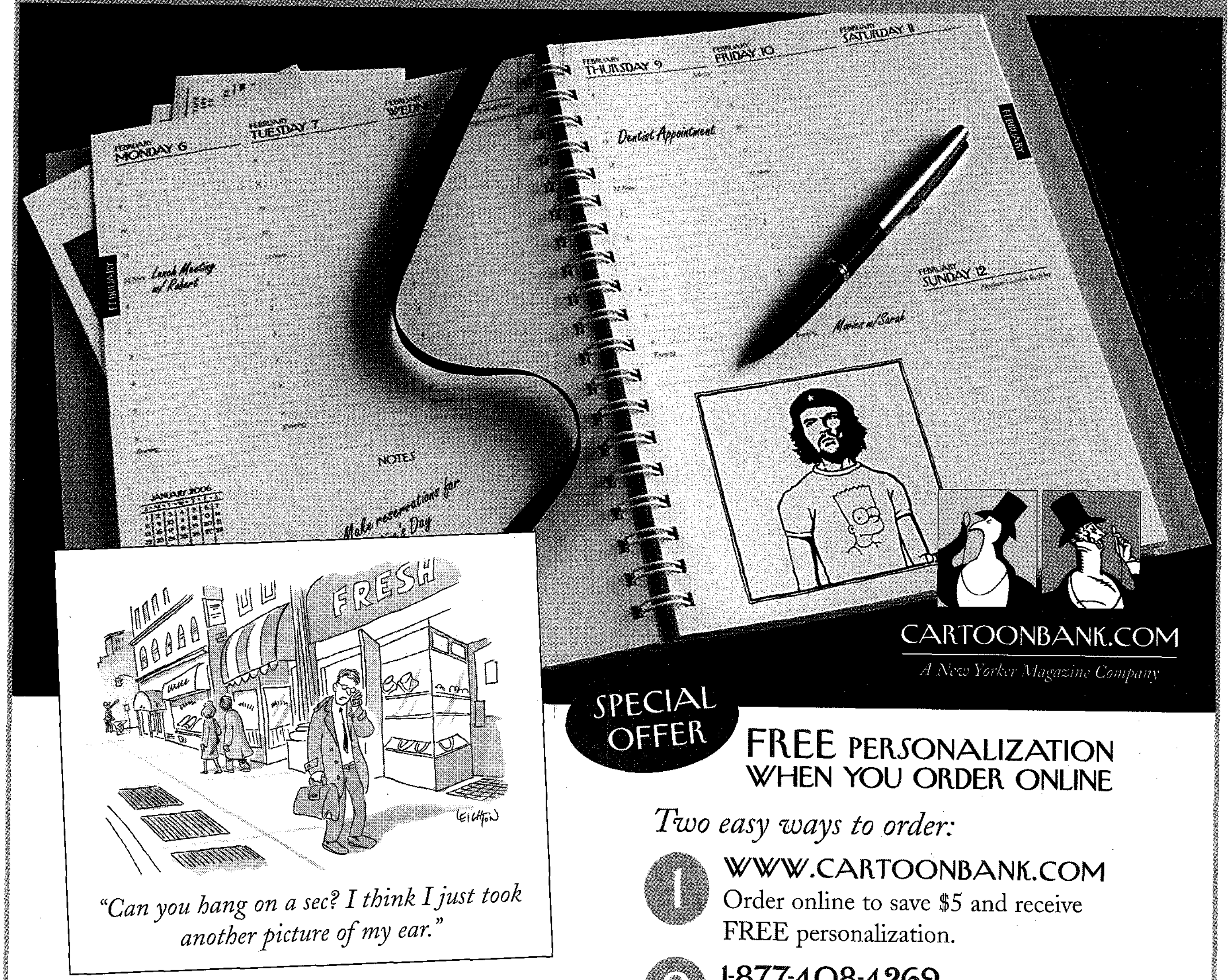
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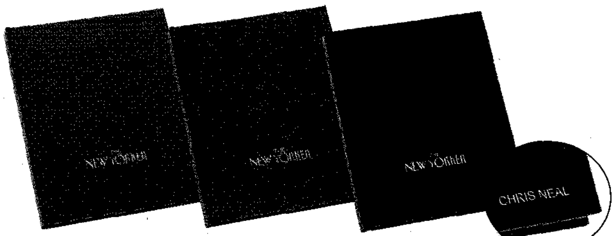
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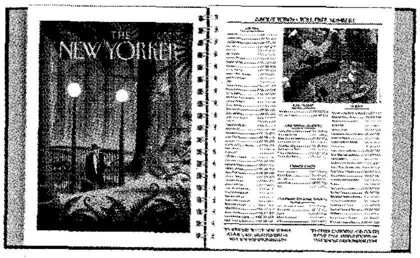
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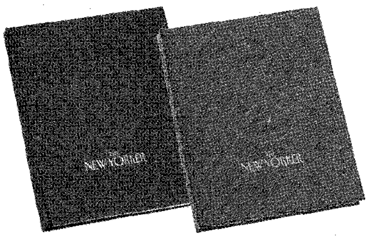
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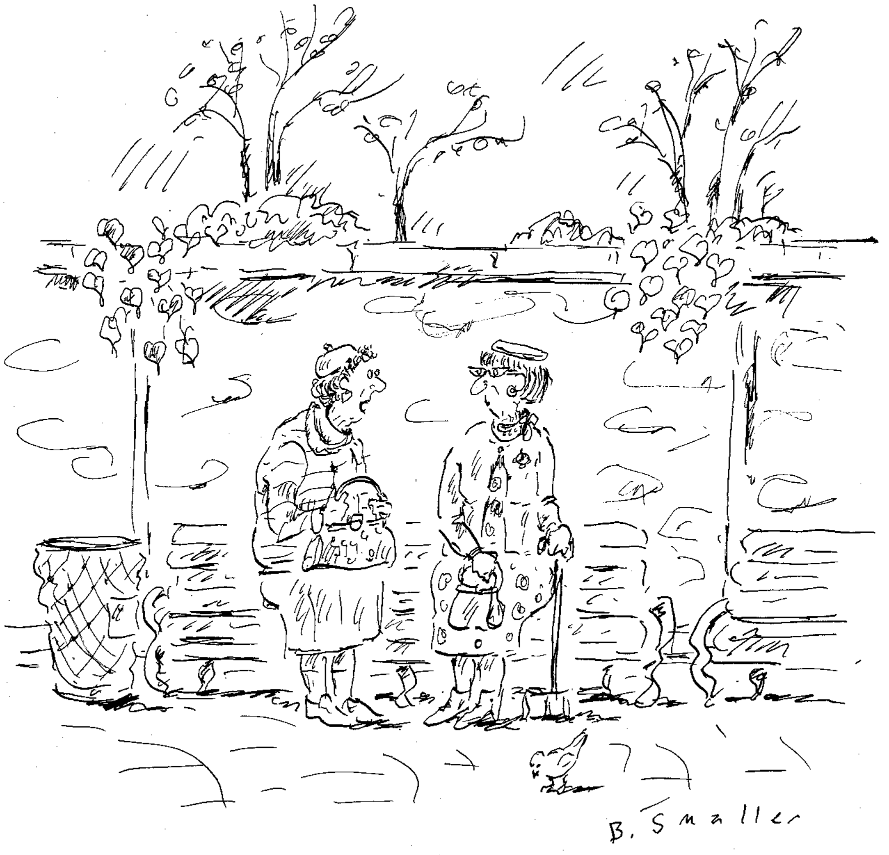
ually frustrated when, after huge efforts to get a word out, it would be the wrong word, or unintelligible. She would try to correct it, but often would become more unintelligible with every attempt to make herself understood. It started to dawn on her, I think, that her power of speech might never come back, and, increasingly, she retreated into silence. This inability to communicate was, for her, as for many patients with aphasia, far worse than the paralysis of half her body. I would sometimes see Pat, in this first year after her stroke, sitting alone in the corridor, or in the patients' dayroom, bereft of speech, surrounded by a sort of penumbra of silence, with a stricken and desolate look on her face.

But, a year later, I found Pat much improved. She was able to understand language better, and she could communicate better—not by speech but by eloquent gesture and pointing. She indicated, for example, fluttering a couple of tickets, that she would go to the movies if, and only if, a friend of hers could go, too. Pat had become less angry, more sociable, and very aware of all that was going on around her.

This represented an enormous social improvement—an improvement in the ability to communicate—but I was not sure how much it rested on actual neurological improvement. Friends and relatives of aphasic patients, indeed, often think that there is more neurological recovery than there actually is, because many such patients develop a remarkable compensatory heightening of other, non-linguistic powers and skills, especially the ability to "read" others' intentions and meanings from their facial expressions, vocal inflections, and tone of voice, as well as all the gestures, postures, and minute movements that normally accompany speech. Such compensation may give surprising powers to aphasics—in particular, an enhanced ability to see through histrionic artifice, equivocation, or lying. I described this in 1985, when I observed a group of aphasic patients watching a Presidential speech on television, and, in 2000, Nancy Etcoff and her colleagues at Massachusetts General Hospital published a study in *Nature* which showed that people with aphasia were in fact "significantly better at detecting lies about emotion than people with no language impairment." Such skills, they observed, apparently took time to develop, for they were not evident in a patient who had been aphasic for only a few months. This seemed to be the case with Pat, who had initially been far from expert in picking up others' emotions and intentions but over the years had become preternaturally skillful at it. If aphasics come to excel in understanding nonverbal language, they can also become more expert in conveying their own thoughts in the same way—and Pat was now starting to move toward a conscious and voluntary (and often inventive) representation of her thoughts and intentions by mime.



*"It's just as easy to love a man with a pension as to love a man without one."*

But while gesture and mime, lacking the grammar and syntax of real language, are not compromised in aphasia, they are not enough; they have only a limited ability to convey complex meanings and propositions (unlike a true sign language, such as congenitally deaf people use). These limitations often infuriated Pat, but a crucial change came when her speech pathologist, Jeannette Wilkens, discovered that, though Pat could not read aloud, and could not read a sentence, she could recognize individual words (and that, indeed, her vocabulary was quite extensive). Wilkens had found this with other aphasic patients as they started to recover, and had devised a sort of dictionary, a book of words arranged in categories of objects, people, and events, as well as moods and emotions. Pat always carried the book on her lap or near her, and would leaf through it rapidly with her left hand and point to the words she needed.

While such a book often worked when patients were closeted in one-on-one sessions with Wilkens, many of our aphasic patients had difficulty reaching out to others—were perhaps too shy, or too depressed, or too disabled from other medical conditions to initiate contact with other people. None of this was the case with Pat, who had been outgoing and social all her life: she boldly approached people, opened her book at the right page, thrust it at them, and pointed to the subject she wanted to talk about.

Pat's life expanded in all sorts of ways with her "bible," as her daughters call it. Soon she was able to guide a conversation in any direction she wanted, a conversation that was on her part accomplished solely by gesture and mime—and this had to be done primarily with her left arm, for her right side was still completely paralyzed. But, despite this limitation, gesture and mime, plus the verbal categories in her book, allowed her a remarkably full and exact expression of her needs and thoughts.

Inside the hospital, she became a node of gossip, despite being unable to communicate in the usual way. Even now, Pat calls her daughters "a hundred times a day," though the conversations are all passive on her part, awaiting questions to which she can answer "yes" (she communicates "yes" by kisses), "no," or "fine," or by noises of approbation, amusement, disapproval, etc.

By 1996, five years after her stroke, her receptive aphasia had almost disappeared—she was able to understand speech, though still unable to express herself in speech (she had certain fixed phrases, like "You're welcome!" or "Fine!," but could not name familiar objects or utter a sentence). She started to paint once again, using her left hand, and she was a terror at dominoes—her nonverbal representational systems were unimpaired. (It has long been understood that aphasia does not affect musical ability, visual imagery, or mechanical aptitude, and researchers at the University of Sheffield have shown recently that numerical reasoning and mathematical syntax can be entirely intact even in patients who are unable to understand or produce grammatical language.)

It is often said that after a stroke or a brain injury whatever recovery is possible will occur within twelve to eighteen months. While this may often be so, I have seen this generalization proved false in many individual patients. And in the past few decades neuroscience has shown what physicians have often observed: that, provided the initial damage is not too great, the brain has more powers of repair and regeneration than was formerly believed. There is, too, more "plasticity"—a greater capacity for undamaged brain areas to take over some of the functions of damaged ones. And, above all, there are powers of accommodation: finding new ways, or other ways, of doing things when the original way is no longer available—and here various forms of therapy, with a resourceful patient, can be of paramount importance. With Pat, even five years after her stroke I noted that she was still showing a steady (though now diminishing) improvement of her receptive powers, her ability to understand language.

(I knew another woman, Madeleine G., who had a crippling expressive aphasia, with very little recovery two years after her stroke—her physicians said then that she had "plateaued"—but who, five years after her stroke, could shop, speak to strangers, and hold her own in almost any conversation.)

Pat is the youngest of seven siblings; her extended family had always played a central part in her life, and this extended further still when Lari's daughter Alexa, Pat's first grandchild, was born in 1993. Alexa, said Lari, "was born into Beth Abraham." She would visit her grandmother frequently, and Pat always had a special toy or treat for her ("I don't know how she got these things," Lari marvelled). Pat would often ask Alexa to take crackers to a friend down the hall who could not walk. Alexa and her two younger siblings, Dean and Eve, are all fascinated by Pat, and like to call her often on the phone when they cannot visit her. Lari feels that they have a very active, very "normal" relationship with their grandmother, a relationship which they all treasure.

One of the pages in Pat's book contained a list of emotional states (she had picked these out from a word list prepared by the speech pathologist). When I asked her, in 1998, what her predominant mood was, she pointed to "happy." There were other adjectives on the mood page, such as "furious," "scared," "tired," "sick," "lonely," "sad," and "bored"—all of which she had indicated, on occasion, in previous years.

In 1999, when I asked her the date, she pointed to "Wednesday, July 28," a little miffed, perhaps, that I had insulted her with such a simple question. She indicated, using her "bible," that she had been, in the past few months, to half a dozen musicals and a couple of art galleries, and that, now that it was summer, she would visit her daughter Lari on Long Island on the weekends and, among other things, swim. "Swim?" I asked, incredulous. Yes, Pat indicated;

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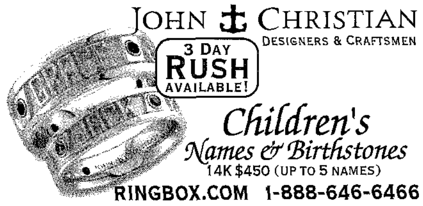
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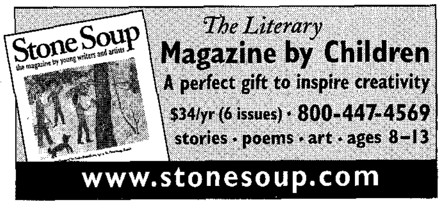
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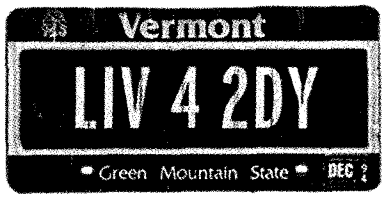
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even with her right side paralyzed, she could still do the sidestroke. She had been a great long-distance swimmer, she indicated, in her youth. She told me how excited she was that Lari would be adopting a new baby in a few months. I was especially struck, on this visit, eight years after her stroke, by the fullness and richness of Pat's daily experiences, and her voracious love of life in the face of what one might judge to be devastating brain damage.

In 2000, Pat showed me photos of her grandchildren. She had visited them all the previous day, for the Fourth of July, and they had watched the Tall Ships and the fireworks on television. She was eager to show me the newspaper, with a picture of the Williams sisters playing tennis. Tennis, she indicated, had been one of her favorite sports, too, along with skiing, riding, and swimming. She was at pains to show me that her fingernails were manicured and painted, and she was dressed in a sun hat and sunglasses, on her way to sun herself on the hospital patio.

By 2002, Pat had become able to use a few spoken words. This was achieved by the use of familiar songs like "Happy Birthday" or "A Bicycle Built for Two," which she would sing along with Connie Tomaino, Beth Abraham's music therapist. Pat was able to get the feeling of the music, and some of the words. For a few minutes afterward, this would "release" her voice, and give her the ability to say some of the words, in a singsong fashion. She started carrying a tape recorder with a cassette of familiar songs, so she could get her language powers working. She demonstrated this with "Oh! What a Beautiful Morning," followed by a melodious "Good morning, Dr. Sacks," with a heavy, rhythmic emphasis on "morning."

Music therapy is invaluable for some patients with expressive aphasia, who, finding they can sing the words to a song, are reassured that language is not wholly lost, that they still have access to words somewhere inside them. The question is then whether the language capacities embedded in song can be removed from their musical context and used for communication. This is sometimes possible to a limited extent, by re-embedding words in a sort of improvised singsong.

But I sensed that Pat's heart was not in this—she felt that her real virtuosity lay in her mimetic powers, her appreciation and use of gesture. She had achieved a skill and intuitiveness here amounting almost to genius.

Mimesis, the deliberate and conscious representation of scenes, thoughts, feelings, intentions, etc., by mime and action, seems to be a specifically human achievement, like language (and perhaps music). Apes, which are able to "ape," or imitate, have little power to create conscious and deliberate mimetic representations.

In "Origins of the Modern Mind," the psychologist Merlin Donald suggests that a "mimetic culture" may have been a crucial intermediate stage in human evolution between the "episodic" culture of apes and the "theoretic" culture of modern man. Mimesis has a much larger and more robust cerebral representation than language, and this may explain why it is so often preserved in patients who have lost language. It is this preservation which can make remarkably rich communication possible for people with aphasia, especially if it can be elaborated and heightened and combined, as in Pat's case, with a lexicon.

Pat has always had a passion to communicate ("This was a woman who talked twenty-four hours a day," Dana said), and it was the frustration of this loquacity which led to absolute fury when she first arrived at the hospital, and to her intense motivation and success in communicating now.

Pat's daughters are sometimes still amazed at her resilience. "Why isn't she depressed," Dana said, "given her earlier history of depression? How could she live like this, I thought at first. . . . I thought she would take a knife to herself." Every so often, her mother makes a gesture that seems to say, "My God, what happened? What is this? Why am I in this room?," as if the raw horror of her stroke had hit her once again. But Pat is aware that she has, in a sense, been very lucky, even though half of her body remains paralyzed. She was lucky that her brain damage, though extensive, did not undermine her force of mind or personality; lucky that her daughters fought so hard from the beginning to keep her engaged and active, and were able to afford extra aides and therapists; lucky, too that she encountered a speech pathologist who observed her sensitively and minutely, and could provide her with a crucial tool, her "bible," which worked so well.

Pat continues to remain active and engaged with the world. She is, as Dana said, the "darling" of the family, and of the floor at the hospital, too. She has not lost the power to captivate people ("She has even captivated you, Dr. Sacks," Dana said), and she can even do a little painting with her left hand. She is grateful to be alive, and to be able to do as much as she can, and this, Dana thinks, is why her mood and morale have been so good.

Lari expressed herself in similar terms. "It's as if the negativity has been wiped away," she told me. "She is much more consistent, appreciative of her life and gifts . . . of other people, too. She is conscious of being privileged, but this makes her kinder, more thoughtful to other patients who may be physically less disabled than she is but much less 'adapted' or 'lucky' or 'happy.' She is the opposite of a victim," Lari concluded. "She actually feels that she has been blessed."

Last November, on a cool Saturday afternoon, I joined Pat and Dana in one of Pat's favorite activities—shopping on Allerton Avenue, near the hospital. We arrived in Pat's room—it was overflowing with plants, paintings, photos and posters, theatre programs—and Pat was awaiting us, already wearing a favorite coat.

As we went up Allerton Avenue, bustling on a weekend afternoon, I saw that half the shopkeepers knew Pat, and shouted "Hi, Pat!" as she bowled past in her wheelchair. She waved at the young woman in the health-food store where she buys her carrot juice, and received a "Hi, Pat!" back. She waved to a Korean woman at the dry cleaner's, blew a kiss, and had a kiss blown back. The woman's sister, Pat was able to indicate to me, used to work in the fruit store.

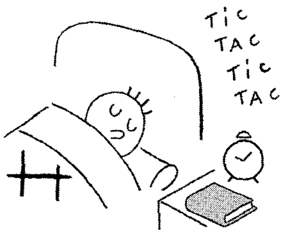
We entered a shoe shop, where Pat's desires were very clear—she wanted a boot, with fur inside, for the upcoming winter. "Zip or Velcro?" Dana inquired. Pat indicated no preference, but wheeled herself in front of the boot display and then, with great decisiveness, pointed to the boots she wanted. Dana said, "But they have laces!" Pat smiled and shrugged, meaning, "So what! Someone else will tie them." She is not without vanity—the boots must be elegant as well as warm. ("Velcro, indeed!" her expression said.) "What size? A nine?" Dana asked. No, Pat gestured, bisecting her finger, an eight-and-a-half.

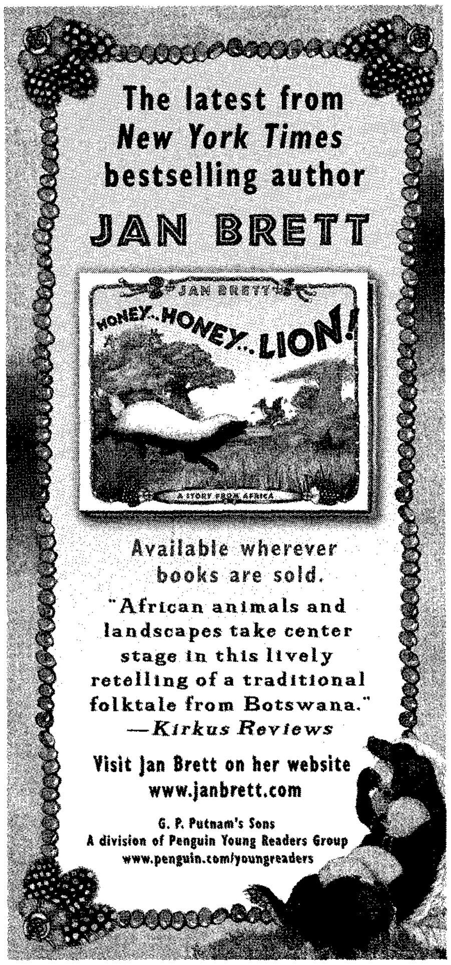
We stopped by the supermarket, where she always picks up a few things for herself and for others at the hospital. Pat knew every aisle, and quickly picked two ripe mangoes for herself, a large bunch of bananas (most, she indicated, she would give away), some small doughnuts, and, at the checkout, three bags of candy. (She indicated that these were for the children of an orderly on her floor.)

As we moved on, laden with our purchases, Dana asked me where I had been earlier in the day. I said I had been to a fern meeting, adding, "I'm a plant person." Pat, overhearing, made a wide gesture, and pointed to herself, meaning, "You and I. We are both plant persons."

"Nothing has changed since her stroke," Dana said. "She has all her old loves and passions. . . . The only thing is," she added, smiling, "she has become a pain in the neck!" Pat laughed, agreeing with this.

We stopped at a coffee shop. Pat clearly had no difficulty with the menu, indicating that she wanted not home fries but French fries, with whole-wheat toast. After the meal, Pat carefully applied lipstick. ("How vain!" Dana exclaimed, with admiration.) Dana wondered whether she could take her mother on a cruise. I mentioned the giant cruise ships I had seen go in and out of Curaçao, and Pat, intrigued, inquired with her book whether they set out from New York. I tried to draw a ship in my notebook; Pat laughed, and, left-handed, did a much better one. ♦

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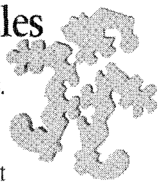

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LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

# BREAKING RANKS

*What turned Brent Scowcroft against the Bush Administration?*

### BY JEFFREY GOLDBERG

At eight o'clock on the morning of August 2, 1990, President George H. W. Bush assembled his National Security Council in the Cabinet Room of the White House. Thirteen hours earlier, Saddam Hussein had sent his Army into Kuwait, and the Administration was searching for a response. Brent Scowcroft, the President's national-security adviser, has an unhappy memory of that first meeting. The tone, he says, was defeatist: "Much of the conversation in those early moments concerned the stability of the oil market. There was an air of resignation about the invasion."

Shortly before the National Security Council meeting began, General Colin Powell, who was then the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told General Norman Schwarzkopf, "I think we'd go to war over Saudi Arabia, but I doubt we'd go to war over Kuwait." For the moment, at least, Powell's assessment reflected the President's mood. Minutes before the meeting, Bush had told reporters that he was not contemplating an armed response. Scowcroft had been listening to the President as he spoke to the press, and the comment immediately struck him as unwise. "Right at the beginning, I believed that it"—the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait—"was intolerable to the interests of the U.S.," he told me recently.

At the time, Scowcroft, a retired Air Force general, was notably hawkish on the Iraq question, more so than the Secretary of State, James A. Baker III, and perhaps even more so than Dick Cheney, who was Bush's Secretary of Defense. Scowcroft believed that if Saddam's aggression was left unanswered it would undermine the international rule of law; it would also, he thought, compromise America's standing in the world at a moment—the end of the Cold War—that was otherwise filled with promise.

Scowcroft is a protégé of Henry Kissinger—he was his deputy when Kissinger was Richard Nixon's national-security adviser. Like Kissinger, he is a purveyor of a "realist" approach to foreign policy: the idea that America should be guided by strategic self-interest, and that moral considerations are secondary at best. But Bush and Scowcroft also spoke expansively about the possibilities for America in the Cold War world, about a New World Order built on benign but resolute American leadership and multilateral coöperation. The United States, Bush said in "A World Transformed," a book that he later co-wrote with Scowcroft, had a "disproportionate responsibility" to use its power "in pursuit of a common good." Iraq's invasion of Kuwait was a direct challenge to Bush's understanding of America's role in the world.

There were initial doubts among some of Bush's advisers. Colin Powell, like many military men shaped by the experience of the Vietnam War, was disinclined to send American troops into battle, and he cautioned the National Security Council against imprudent action. "My first questions had to do with defending Saudi Arabia, and the importance of having a clear political understanding first of what we were doing," Powell told me recently. "Brent immediately saw that the invasion had to be reversed. He was a little further forward on the need to do something."

Scowcroft argued unyieldingly for intervention, and his view prevailed. Within days, Bush announced, "This will not stand, this aggression against Kuwait"—a burst of fortitude that commentators later attributed to a comment from Margaret Thatcher ("Don't go all wobbly on us, George," she reportedly told him). Scowcroft, whose modesty may be pronounced to the point of ostentation, loyally insists that the President arrived at his decision alone, but several of Scowcroft's former colleagues said that it was Scowcroft's firmness, along with Thatcher's prodding, that strengthened Bush's resolve to confront Saddam. Scowcroft is "not a blowhard," the senior Bush told me in a recent e-mail. "He has a great propensity for friendship. By that I mean someone I can depend on to tell me what I need to know and not just what I want to hear, and at the same time he is someone on whom I know I always can rely and trust implicitly."

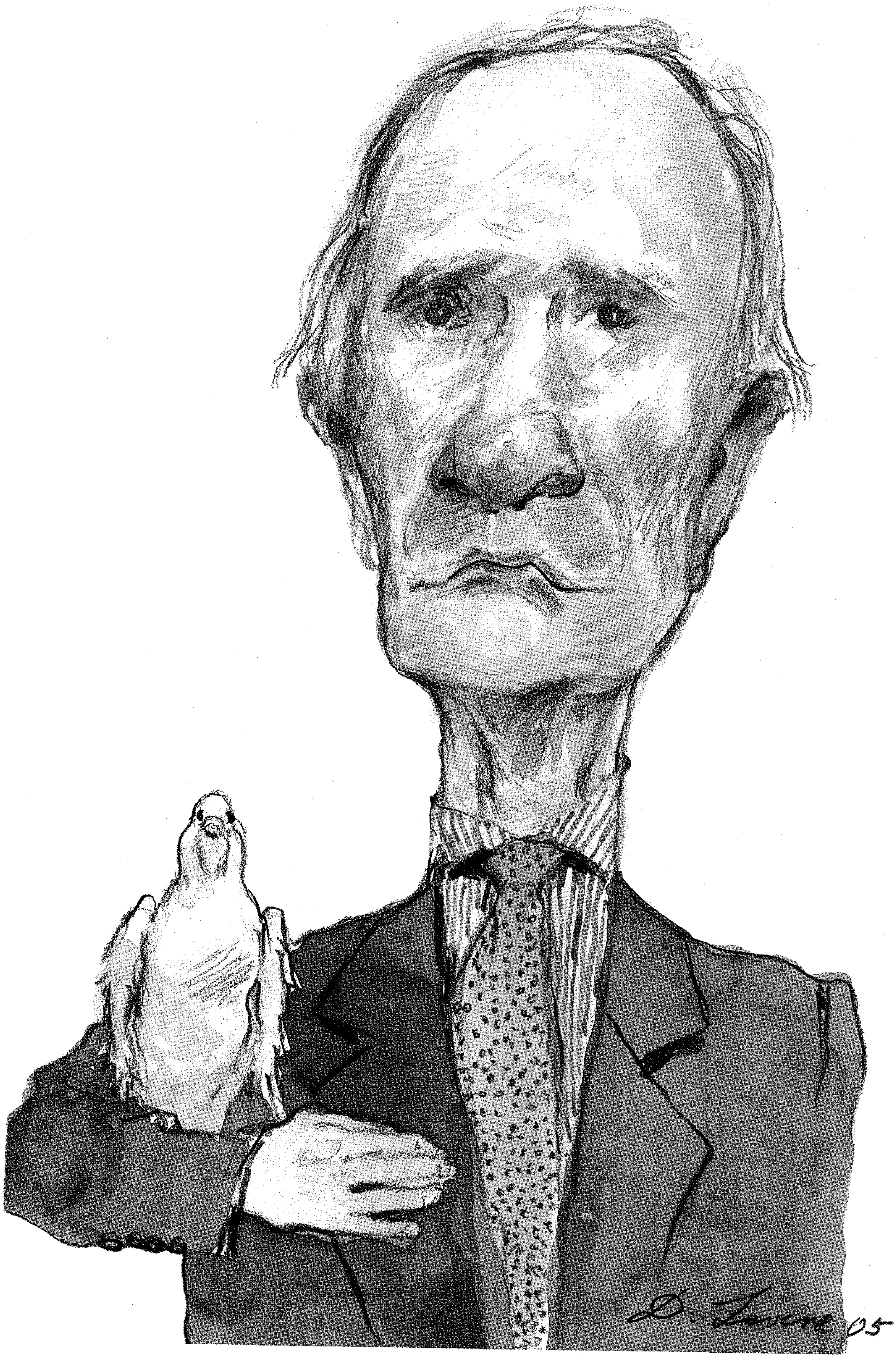
In the six months leading to the war, Scowcroft became indispensable to Bush, subjecting war planners to sharp questioning, and debating those opposed to intervention. It is easy to forget, given the war's stunning speed and its low casualty count on the U.S. side (a hundred and forty-eight American soldiers lost their lives in the fighting), that there was a great deal of domestic opposition to Bush's plan, particularly among congressional Democrats.

The chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, Sam Nunn, of Georgia, led the opposition. He conducted hearings in which many of the country's most widely respected military and foreign-policy experts prophesied cataclysm: American casualties would be in the thousands, they said, in a war that was unnecessary. Sanctions, it was argued, would be sufficient to drive Saddam out of Kuwait. Some of Bush's aides came to refer to Nunn as "Neville."

Bush did not let domestic opposition, or the views of Mikhail Gorbachev, who sought a negotiated solution, stand in the way of what he came to see as a moral cause of surpassing importance.

DAVID LEVINE

*"We own it," Scowcroft said of Iraq. "Now, will we win? I think there's a fair chance we'll win. But look at the cost."*


D. Levine 05

*"Ever since his identity was stolen, he's been easier to be with."*

• •

On December 31, 1990, he wrote a letter to his five children: "How many lives might have been saved if appeasement had given way to force earlier in the late 30s or earliest 40s?" it read. "How many Jews might have been spared the gas chambers, or how many Polish patriots might be alive today? I look at today's crisis as 'good' vs. 'evil'—yes, it is that clear." Scowcroft never engaged in this sort of rhetoric. A line had been crossed, and Iraq needed to be punished; he did not invoke the spectre of Hitler to make his point.

The war began on January 16, 1991. An air campaign that lasted five weeks greatly weakened Iraq's military capabilities. On February 24th, General Schwarzkopf, the commander of American and allied forces, unleashed a ground attack that quickly turned into a rout; the Iraqi Army collapsed, and its soldiers fled Kuwait on foot. The road to Baghdad was clear, but, on Bush's instruction, the Americans did not take it. Although Bush had publicly compared Saddam to Hitler, the goal was never to liberate Iraq from his rule. "Our military didn't want any part of occupying that big Arab country, and the only way to get Saddam was to go all the way to Baghdad," James Baker told me recently.

Afterward, Bush was criticized for the decision to end the ground war at its hundredth hour. Even some officials of the Administration were unhappy at what they saw as a premature end to the fighting. In "Rise of the Vulcans," James Mann recounts that Paul Wolfowitz and I. Lewis Libby, who were then aides to Cheney, believed that a coup d'état might have occurred had the Bush Administration waited to announce that the war was over.

At the time, though, no one close to Bush expressed doubts about the ending of the war, much less about its strategic goal. "For a bunch of years, a lot of people who should know better have said that we had an alternative," Powell told me. "We didn't. The simple reason is we were operating under a U.N. mandate that did not provide for any such thing. We put together a strong coalition of Gulf states, and Egypt and Syria, and they signed up for a very specific issue—expelling Iraq from Kuwait. Nor did President Bush ever consider it."

A principal reason that the Bush Administration gave no thought to unseating Saddam was that Brent Scowcroft gave no thought to it. An American occupation of Iraq would be politically and militarily untenable, Scowcroft told Bush. And though the President had employed the rhetoric of moral necessity to make the case for war, Scowcroft said, he would not let his feelings about good and evil dictate the advice he gave the President.

It would have been no problem for America's military to reach Baghdad, he said. The problems would have arisen when the Army entered the Iraqi capital. "At the minimum, we'd be an occupier in a hostile land," he said. "Our forces would be sniped at by guerrillas, and, once we were there, how would we get out? What would be the rationale for leaving? I don't like the term 'exit strategy'—but what do you do with Iraq once you own it?"

Scowcroft stopped for a moment. We were sitting in the offices of the Scowcroft Group, a consulting firm he heads, in downtown Washington. He appeared to be weighing the consequences of speaking his mind. His speech is generally calibrated not to give offense, especially to the senior Bush and the Bush family. He is eighty and, by most accounts, has been content to cede visibility to the larger personalities with whom he has worked. James Baker told me that he and Scowcroft got along well in part because Scowcroft let Baker speak for the Administration. I learned from people who know Scowcroft that he finds it painful to be seen as critical of his best friend's son, but in the course of several interviews prudence several times gave way to impatience. "This is exactly where we are now," he said of Iraq, with no apparent satisfaction. "We own it. And we can't let go. We're getting sniped at. Now, will we win? I think there's a fair chance we'll win. But look at the cost."

The first Gulf War was a success, Scowcroft said, because the President knew better than to set unachievable goals. "I'm not a pacifist," he said. "I believe in the use of force. But there has to be a good reason for using force. And you have to know when to stop using force."

Scowcroft does not believe that the promotion of American-style democracy abroad is a sufficiently good reason to use force. "I thought we ought to make it our duty to help make the world friendlier for the growth of liberal regimes," he said. "You encourage democracy over time, with assistance, and aid, the traditional way. Not how the neocons do it."

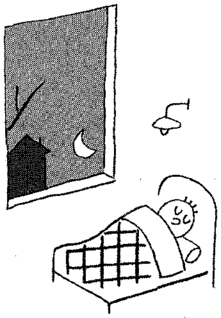
The neoconservatives—the Republicans who argued most fervently for the second Gulf war—believe in the export of democracy, by violence if that is required, Scowcroft said. "How do the neocons bring democracy to Iraq? You invade, you threaten and pressure, you evangelize." And now, Scowcroft said, America is suffering from the consequences of that brand of revolutionary utopianism. "This was said to be part of the war on terror, but Iraq feeds terrorism," he said.

Scowcroft was Richard Nixon's military assistant in the last years of the Vietnam War, and he says, "Vietnam was visceral in the American people. That was a really bitter period, and it turned us against foreign-policy adventures deeply, and it was not until the Gulf War that we were able to come out of that. This is not that deep." But, he said, "we're moving in that direction."

In August of 2002, seven months before George W. Bush launched the invasion of Iraq, Scowcroft upset the White House with an opinion piece in the *Wall Street Journal*. The headline read, "DON'T ATTACK SADDAM." Scowcroft would have preferred something more nuanced, he told me, but the words accurately reflected his message. In the article, he argued that an invasion of Iraq would deflect American attention from the war on terrorism, and that it would do nothing to solve the conflict between Palestinians and Israelis, which he has long believed is the primary source of unhappiness in the Middle East. Unlike the current Bush Administration, which is unambiguously pro-Israel, Scowcroft, James Baker, and others associated with the elder George Bush believe that Israel's settlement policies arouse Arab anger, and that American foreign policy should reflect the fact that there are far more Arabs than Israelis in the world. "The obsession of the region . . . is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict," Scowcroft wrote in the *Journal*. "If we were seen to be turning our back on that bitter conflict—which the region, rightly or wrongly, perceives to be clearly within our power to resolve—in order to go after Iraq, there would be an explosion of outrage against us." Scowcroft went on to say that the United States was capable of defeating Saddam's military. "But it would not be a cakewalk. On the contrary, it undoubtedly would be very expensive—with serious consequences for the U.S. and global economy—and could as well be bloody. In fact, Saddam would be likely to conclude he had nothing left to lose, leading him to unleash whatever weapons of mass destruction he possesses."

Like nearly everyone else in Washington, Scowcroft believed that Saddam maintained stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons, but he wrote that a strong inspections program would have kept him at bay. "There may have come a time when we would have needed to take Saddam out," he told me. "But he wasn't really a threat. His Army was weak, and the country hadn't recovered from sanctions."

Scowcroft's colleagues told me that he would have preferred to deliver his analysis privately to the White House. But Scowcroft, the apotheosis of a Washington insider, was by then definitively on the outside, and there was no one in the White House who would listen to him. On the face of it, this is remarkable: Scowcroft's best friend's son is the President; his friend Dick Cheney is the Vice-President; Condoleezza Rice, who was the national-security adviser, and is now the Secretary of State, was once a Scowcroft protégée; and the current national-security adviser, Stephen Hadley, is another protégé and a former principal at the Scowcroft Group.



According to friends, Scowcroft was consulted more frequently by the Clinton White House than he has been by George W. Bush's. Clinton's national-security adviser, Samuel Berger, told me that he valued Scowcroft's opinions: "He knows a great deal, and I always found it useful to speak to him." Arnold Kanter, a former Under-Secretary of State in the first Bush Administration and now a principal in the Scowcroft Group, was the one who suggested that Scowcroft set down his thoughts on Iraq. "If Brent had an ongoing dialogue and ready access and felt his views were being heard, he might not have written the op-ed," Kanter told me. "I hadn't heard anyone put Iraq in the strategic perspective that included the Middle East peace process and terrorism, and I thought it was important to hear."

By publicly critiquing the Administration's strategic priorities, Scowcroft knew that he risked offending the White House, but clearly he was offended by its posture before the war. "All the neocons were saying, 'Finish the job,' " he said. "In fact, the President said that. He said it before he launched the war." Scowcroft fell silent. I asked him if he was bothered by those statements. He stayed silent, but he nodded.

Scowcroft suggested that the White House was taking the wrong advice, and listening to a severely limited circle. He singled out the Princeton Middle East scholar Bernard Lewis, who was consulted by Vice-President Cheney and others after the terror attacks of September 11, 2001. Lewis, Scowcroft said, fed a feeling in the White House that the United States must assert itself. "It's that idea that we've got to hit somebody hard," Scowcroft said. "And Bernard Lewis says, 'I believe that one of the things you've got to do to Arabs is hit them between the eyes with a big stick. They respect power.' " Cheney, in particular, Scowcroft thinks, accepted Lewis's view of Middle East politics. "The real anomaly in the Administration is Cheney," Scowcroft said. "I consider Cheney a good friend—I've known him for thirty years. But Dick Cheney I don't know anymore."

He went on, "I don't think Dick Cheney is a neocon, but allied to the core of neocons is that bunch who thought we made a mistake in the first Gulf War, that we should have finished the job. There was another bunch who were traumatized by 9/11, and who thought, 'The world's going to hell and we've got to show we're not going to take this, and we've got to respond, and Afghanistan is O.K., but it's not sufficient.'" Scowcroft supported the invasion of Afghanistan as a "direct response" to terrorism.

Colin Powell told me that he was not offended by Scowcroft's public doubts. "The concern is cost—what are we getting ourselves into? That is not an unprincipled concern." But the White House—in particular Rice—saw Scowcroft's op-ed as a betrayal, and as a political problem: Scowcroft has a commanding voice on national-security matters. But there was another, more personal dimension. "What makes it even more awkward is the suspicion that he's speaking not just for himself" but for the elder Bush as well, Robert Gates, who was Scowcroft's deputy at the National Security Council, said.

The distancing of Brent Scowcroft dates nearly to the beginning of the second Bush Administration. Scowcroft was appointed chairman of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board in the first term, but he was not consulted on plans for Iraq. "He's not the only person to be frozen out," one colleague of Scowcroft's from the first Bush Administration told me—a clear reference to James Baker and a number of other officials. "The only thing that is unusual is that Scowcroft was treated like everyone else." His appointment to the advisory board was not renewed at the end of 2004.

A common criticism of the Administration of George W. Bush is that it ignores ideas that conflict with its aims. "We always made sure the President was hearing all the possibilities," John Sununu, who served as chief of staff to George H. W. Bush, said. "That's one of the differences between the first Bush Administration and this Bush Administration." I asked Colin Powell if he thought, in retrospect, that the Administration should have paid attention to Scowcroft's arguments about Iraq. Powell, who is widely believed to have been far less influential in policymaking than either Cheney or the Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, said, pointedly, "*I* always listen to him. He's a very analytic and thoughtful individual, he's powerful in argument, and I've never worked with a better friend and colleague." When, in an e-mail, I asked George H. W. Bush about Scowcroft's most useful qualities as a national-security adviser, he replied that Scowcroft "was very good about making sure that we did not simply consider the 'best case,' but instead considered what it would mean if things went our way, and also if they did not."

The friendship between Scowcroft and the first President Bush extends back more than thirty years; the two became close during the Ford Administration, when Scowcroft replaced Kissinger as national-security adviser and George H. W. Bush was the director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Their relationship, built on a shared view of the world, a clubby camaraderie, and genuine affection, was exceptionally strong. During his term, Bush established the "Scowcroft Award," for the senior official who fell asleep most ostentatiously during meetings. Scowcroft "earned the award the old-fashioned way," Bush wrote me. "He slept and slept in trying situations."

One reason that Scowcroft was so effective as national-security adviser was that the entire Cabinet knew that hearing from him was akin to hearing from the President. David Rothkopf, the author of "Running the World," a history of the National Security Council, said that Scowcroft mastered the bureaucracy while maintaining his position as perhaps the President's closest adviser. He was "a true partner of the President," Rothkopf said. "They knew each other extremely well, and were able to communicate at the level of equals, even if the President's primacy was never in doubt."

Even today, Scowcroft, who lives in Bethesda, Maryland, spends many weekends at a condominium he keeps in Kennebunkport, near the Bush family com-

PERSONNEL
LeLain

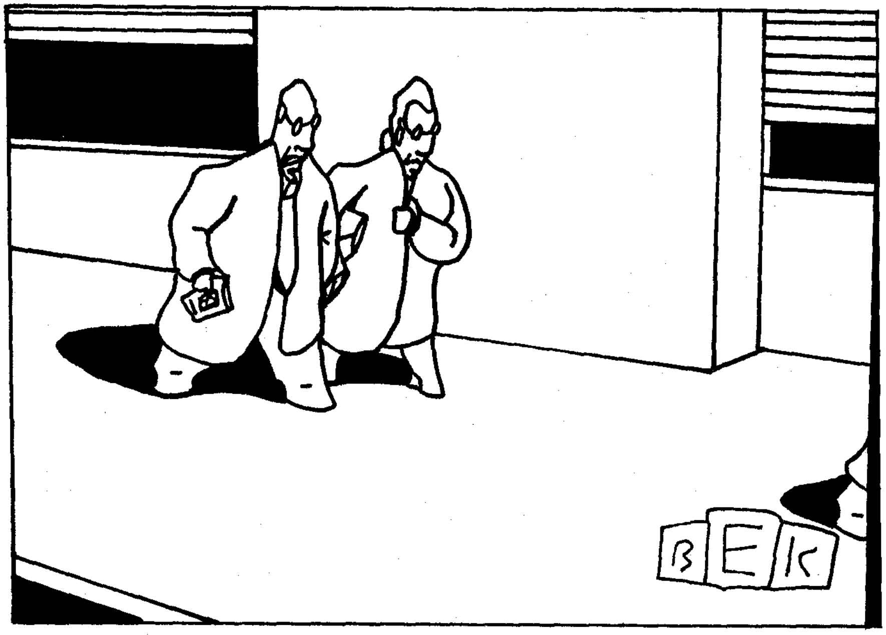
*"For your convenience, there's a parking garage just next door."*

pound. According to friends of the elder Bush, the estrangement of his son and his best friend has been an abiding source of unhappiness, not only for Bush but for Barbara Bush as well. George Bush, the forty-first President, has tried several times to arrange meetings between his son, "Forty-three," and his former national-security adviser—to no avail, according to people with knowledge of these intertwined relationships. "There have been occasions when Forty-one has engineered meetings in which Forty-three and Scowcroft are in the same place at the same time, but they were social settings that weren't conducive to talking about substantive issues," a Scowcroft confidant said.

Scowcroft would not talk to me about the father's attempts at reconciliation, but he said that he hoped for a better relationship with the son. "Am I happy at not being closer to the White House? No. I would prefer to be closer. I like George Bush personally, and he is the son of a man I'm just crazy about."

When I asked Scowcroft if the son was different from the father, he said, "I don't want to go there," but his dissatisfaction with the son's agenda could not have been clearer. When I asked him to name issues on which he agrees with the younger Bush, he said, "Afghanistan." He paused for twelve seconds. Finally, he said, "I think we're doing well on Europe," and left it at that.

The disintegrating relationship between Scowcroft and Condoleezza Rice has not escaped the notice of their colleagues from the first Bush Administration. She was a political-science professor at Stanford when, in 1989, Scowcroft hired her to serve as a Soviet expert on the National Security Council. Scowcroft found her bright—"brighter than I was"—and personable, and he brought her all the way inside, to the Bush family circle. When Scowcroft published his *Wall Street Journal* article, Rice telephoned him, according to several people with knowledge of the call. "She said, 'How could you do this to us?'" a Scowcroft friend recalled. "What bothered Brent more than Condi yelling at him was the fact that here she is, the national-security adviser, and she's not interested in hearing what a former national-security adviser had to say."



*"Maybe I don't like stunning débuts."*

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The two worked closely in the first Bush Administration, although Rice tended to take a tougher line than Scowcroft on Soviet issues. Robert Gates, then Scowcroft's deputy and Rice's boss, recalled how he and Rice would argue with Scowcroft in 1990 and 1991, during the period when Boris Yeltsin, as the elected leader of the Russian republic, became a rival to the Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev. "Condi and I felt very strongly about reaching beyond Gorbachev," he said. "Brent and Baker believed you could only deal with one President of the Soviet Union at a time."

Rice's conversion to the world view of George W. Bush is still a mystery, however. Privately, many of her ex-colleagues from the first President Bush's National Security Council say that it is rooted in her Christian faith, which leads her to see the world in moralistic terms, much as the President does. Although she was tutored by a national-security adviser, Scowcroft, who thought it intemperate of Ronald Reagan to call the Soviet Union an "evil empire," she now works comfortably for a President who speaks in terms of "evildoers" and the "axis of evil."

Rice's split with her former National Security Council colleagues was made evident at a dinner in early September of 2002, at 1789, a Georgetown restaurant. Scowcroft, Rice, and several people from the first Bush Administration were there. The conversation, turning to the current Administration's impending plans for Iraq, became heated. Finally, Rice said, irritably, "The world is a messy place, and someone has to clean it up." The remark stunned the other guests. Scowcroft, as he later told friends, was flummoxed by Rice's "evangelical tone."

Scowcroft told me that he still has a high regard for Rice. He did note, however, that her "expertise is in the former Soviet Union and Europe. Less on the Middle East." Rice, through a spokesman, said, "Sure, we've had some differences, and that's understandable. But he's a good friend and is going to stay a good friend."

Yet the two do not see each other much anymore. According to friends of Scowcroft, Rice has asked him to call her to set up a dinner, but he has not, apparently, pursued the invitation. The last time the two had dinner, nearly two years ago, it ended unhappily, Scowcroft acknowledged. "We were having dinner just when Sharon said he was going to pull out of Gaza," at the end of 2003. "She said, 'At least there's some good news,' and I said, 'That's terrible news.' She said, 'What do you mean?' And I said that for Sharon this is not the first move, this is the last move. He's getting out of Gaza because he can't sustain eight thousand settlers with half his Army protecting them. Then, when he's out, he will have an Israel that he can control and a Palestinian state atomized enough that it can't be a problem." Scowcroft added, "We had a terrible fight on that."

They also argued about Iraq. "She says we're going to democratize Iraq, and I said, 'Condi, you're not going to democratize Iraq,' and she said, 'You know, you're just stuck in the old days,' and she comes back to this thing that we've tolerated an autocratic Middle East for fifty years and so on and so forth," he said. Then a barely perceptible note of satisfaction entered his voice, and he said, "But we've had fifty years of peace."

For most of the past hundred years, American foreign policy has oscillated between two opposing impulses: to make the world more like America, or to deal with it as it is. Those who object to what they call "interference" in the affairs of others—today's realists—often cite the words of John Quincy Adams, who in 1821 said that America stands with those who seek freedom and independence, "but she goes not abroad, in search of monsters to destroy." By contrast, Woodrow Wilson, the unbounded moralist, said, in seeking a declaration of war against Germany in 1917, that "the world must be made safe for democracy." Wilson told Congress, "We are but one of the champions of the rights of mankind. We shall be satisfied when those rights have been made as secure as the faith and the freedom of nations can make them."

At different times, the isolationist impulse, which would have America withdraw entirely from the affairs of the world, has been felt strongly in Washington—for instance, in the America First movement before the Second World War. Today, few in the Republican Party, or even among liberal Democrats, believe that America has no military role to play in any hemisphere other than its own.

The desire to undermine or overthrow brutal regimes—to transform them into democracies—is irresistible for many Americans. The realists argue that these global Wilsonians have an unacceptably high tolerance for the kind of instability that the export of democracy can bring. "The United States . . . must temper its missionary spirit with a concept of the national interest and rely on its head as well as its heart in defining its duty to the world," Henry Kissinger wrote in the third volume of his memoirs. By contrast, the current President, in his second inaugural address, set for America a breathtakingly large mission. "It is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world," Bush said.

For Brent Scowcroft, the rhetoric is not matched by reality. "I believe that you cannot with one sweep of the hand or the mind cast off thousands of years of history," he says. "This notion that inside every human being is the burning desire for freedom and liberty, much less democracy, is probably not the case. I don't think anyone knows what burns inside others. Food, shelter, security, stability. Have you read Erich Fromm, 'Escape from Freedom'? I don't agree with him, but some people don't really want to be free."

Scowcroft is unmoved by the stirrings of democracy movements in the Middle East. He does not believe, for instance, that the signs of a democratic awakening in Lebanon are related to the Iraq war. He sees the recent evacuation of the Syrian Army from Lebanon not as a victory for self-government but as a foreshadowing of civil war. "I think it's something we have to worry about—the sectarian emotions that were there when the Syrians went in aren't gone."

Scowcroft and those who share his views believe that the reality of life in Iraq at the moment is undermining the neoconservative agenda. Richard Haass, the president of the Council on Foreign Relations, who served as Colin Powell's chief policy planner during the first Bush Administration (and who was Scowcroft's Middle East expert on the National Security Council during the first Gulf War) said that the days of armed idealism are over. "We've seen the ideological high-water mark," he said. "I mean wars of choice, and unilateralism, and by that I mean an emphasis, almost to the point of exclusion of everything else, on regime change as opposed to diplomacy aimed at policy change."

William Kristol, the editor of *The Weekly Standard*, has been a determined advocate of the Iraq war and an equally persistent critic of foreign-policy realism. "I think it's a pseudo-springtime for realism," Kristol said. "When things go bad, realists look good, until things look really bad. Have the mistakes of the last century been ones of too much intervention or not enough? Was it good that we waited to be attacked on December 7, 1941? I would say the same about the Balkans and about terrorism." When I mentioned Scowcroft's assertion that Middle East stability brought America fifty years of peace, Kristol laughed, and asked, "Are we really going to go into the twenty-first century trying to prop up the House of Saud? Is that the goal of American foreign policy? Is that reasonable or realistic?" Kristol noted that fifteen of the nineteen hijackers of September 11, 2001, were citizens of Saudi Arabia, whose government is autocratic and pro-American; the leader of the hijacking cell, Mohamed Atta, was an Egyptian, whose government each year receives roughly two billion dollars in American aid.

The President's foreign policy, which the political scientist John Mearsheimer calls "Wilsonianism with teeth," is a rejection of his father's approach. It is certainly a rejection of Scowcroft's sentiment-free pragmatism. "I've been accused of tolerating autocracies in the Middle East, and there's some validity in that," Scowcroft said. "It's easy in the name of stability to be comfortable with the status quo."

The status quo has been good for Scowcroft's livelihood, as it has been for Henry Kissinger's; Scowcroft, along with Lawrence Eagleburger, a former Secretary of State, was a founder of Kissinger Associates, which placed in the service of multinational companies the expertise and contacts of its principals. The Scowcroft Group today has a client list of roughly thirty large corporations, many of which pay a six-figure annual retainer. Scowcroft said that he does no business in Saudi Arabia, but has strong friendships there, as he has in Beijing and Ankara and other capitals that benefitted from good relations with the first Bush Administration. Scowcroft became prickly when I asked him if he works as a "door-opener" for American businesses in these capitals. "We give strategic advice," he said. "No one should come to us with that expectation."

The status quo, Scowcroft said, is not necessarily a good thing, but it might be better than what follows. "My kind of realism would look at what are the most likely consequences of pushing out a government. What will replace it?" What will replace autocratic but stable governments, neoconservative thinkers say, is whatever the people of the Middle East decide will replace them. Robert Kagan, of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and a Kristol ally, has written critically of the Bush Administration's incomplete adherence to its own anti-tyranny doctrine. Referring to President Hosni Mubarak of Egypt, Kagan wrote, "Perhaps there is concern that too much pressure on Mubarak might produce a victory by the Muslim Brotherhood, the most popular Egyptian opposition party, which has been outlawed by the government. That's a risk, of course, but if the Bush Administration isn't willing to let Islamists, even radical Islamists, win votes in a fair election, then Bush officials should stop talking so much about democracy and go back to supporting the old dictatorships."

Scowcroft believes that the Administration has already gone too far in Kagan's direction. "Let's suppose Mubarak disappears and we have an election," he said. "The good guys are not going to win that election. The bad guys are going to win that election. The bad guys are always better organized. Always. The most ruthless, the tough ones, are the ones who are going to rise to the top in a chaotic society. That's my fear."

The Bush Administration does not, as a rule, concede that democratization in the Middle East could lead to a series of Islamist states. One day, I mentioned to Scowcroft an interview I had had with Paul Wolfowitz, when he was Donald Rumsfeld's deputy. Wolfowitz was the leading neoconservative thinker in the senior ranks of the current Bush Administration. (He is now the president of the World Bank.) I asked him what he would think if previously autocratic Arab countries held

ILL WINDS BY ARNOLD ROTH

Arnold Roth

free elections and then proceeded to vote Islamists into power. Wolfowitz answered, "Look, fifty per cent of the Arab world are women. Most of those women do not want to live in a theocratic state. The other fifty per cent are men. I know a lot of them. I don't think they want to live in a theocratic state."

Scowcroft said of Wolfowitz, "He's got a utopia out there. We're going to transform the Middle East, and then there won't be war anymore. He can make them democratic. He is a tough-minded idealist, but where he is truly an idealist is that he brushes away questions, says, 'It won't happen,' whereas I would say, 'It's likely to happen and therefore you can't take the chance.' Paul's idealism sweeps away doubts." Wolfowitz, for his part, said to me, "It's absurdly unrealistic, demonstrably unrealistic, to ignore how strong the desire for freedom is."

Scowcroft said that he is equally concerned about Wolfowitz's unwillingness to contemplate bad outcomes and Kagan's willingness to embrace them on principle. "What the realist fears is the consequences of idealism," he said. "The reason I part with the neocons is that I don't think in any reasonable time frame the objective of democratizing the Middle East can be successful. If you can do it, fine, but I don't you think you can, and in the process of trying to do it you can make the Middle East a lot worse." He added, "I'm a realist in the sense that I'm a cynic about human nature."

## TO A FOG SPIRIT

*On Halloween*

Made up and masked, you stream into the night,
your cape floating like gossamer behind you,
the moon illuminating what you are and are not:
a cool customer, slippery as quicksilver.

I cannot fathom you exactly, though I try to.
Lately, I've noticed you're all about change,
change and silence. And you have properties:
you expand and contract, filling whatever

space you're in, or self-contained as a cat.
Some mornings, impersonating one of *us*,
you wake, dress, eat, then vanish out the door,
the room suddenly too silent, the day clear as a bell.

I remember a May morning twelve years ago,
before you were *you*, when I woke to a landscape
wiped clean as a blackboard and knew you were hiding
inside a stillness different from any I had ever known.

Scowcroft learned his cynicism by absorbing the ideas of the master of cold-eyed realism, the political theorist Hans Morgenthau, who argued that it is in the nature of states to seek power above all. Morgenthau was suspicious of foreign entanglements (he opposed the Vietnam War), and had seen democracy's failings—he, like Henry Kissinger, was a Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany, and he watched his Gentile neighbors vote Hitler into power. "Morgenthau was brand-new when I went to graduate school, and I just devoured it," Scowcroft said. Today, he calls himself an "enlightened realist" or, alternatively, a "cynical idealist," but in his early days he was deeply attached to Morgenthau's world view.

Scowcroft's path to realism began, in a sense, with a life-threatening accident. It had been his dream, he said, from the age of twelve, to attend West Point. As a child in Ogden, Utah, where he was reared in a Mormon family, he had read a book called "West Point Today" and, he said, "it just captured me." He was still a cadet when the Second World War ended. "I assumed when I went in that I would fight," he said. "I remember when the war ended and we were on cadet maneuvers in upstate New York, and I was manning a mortar, thinking, What the hell am I doing here? The war is over. There aren't going to be any more wars."

He graduated from West Point in 1947, in the top quarter of his class, and joined the Army Air Corps, because "all my friends were joining." The accident that altered the course of his life occurred during a dogfighting exercise over northern New England: "I had just taken off, and one of my companions jumped on me and sort of attacked me right off. So I advanced my power to go after him, and the engine governor malfunctioned and the propeller overspun. I didn't know it, but it had broken a piston rod and I was losing my coolant. My power was steadily going down. I was at about fifteen hundred feet, still strapped in. This was New Hampshire, forested, and I looked around—there was a little clearing. The last thing I remember was looking under my wing at the tips of the last trees just under me."

Scowcroft's back was broken in the crash, and he spent two years in Army hospitals. When he came out, doctors told him that he wouldn't fly again. He was asked by West Point to teach.

In 1959, he was posted to Belgrade, to serve as the assistant U.S. Air Force attaché at the embassy there. In Belgrade, Scowcroft learned something about the power of nationalism. "I don't remember ever hearing people call themselves Yugoslavs," he said. "They always called themselves Serbs, Croats, Slovenians." Realists, he noted, tend to believe in the abiding relevance of national feeling, especially when compared with such abstractions as Communist ideology.

Scowcroft returned from Belgrade to take a teaching post at the Air Force Academy. The Air Force, which was separated from the Army in 1947, was trying to cultivate its own strategic thinkers, and it sent some of its best young officers to graduate school. Scowcroft attended Columbia, where he received a Ph.D. He went on to a series of strategic-planning posts in the Pentagon. Scowcroft rose steadily in the Air

And that night in January, after our long journey,
when we were almost *there*, and the bridge to the island
disappeared, and we pushed on anyway (did we have a choice?)
into black foggy bottomless space and didn't fall—

O fog spirit, are you a magician?
How did you do *that*?

Does fog beget fog?
No, you have a mother and father.
So creep back to this house
and with a hand solid as my own
rap *hard!* three times on the door,

and when it opens, as it will,
step through the portal and change,
change back into my daughter again.

—*Elizabeth Spires*

Force, and, soon after he earned his first general's star, he was appointed Nixon's senior military assistant. He was put in charge of many quotidian but indispensable things, including the White House's limousines. This was when he came to the attention of Henry Kissinger. Kissinger was watching one day as H. R. Haldeman, the White House chief of staff, dressed down Scowcroft for some minor sin of administration. "We were flying on Air Force One," Kissinger told me. "I saw Scowcroft disagreeing with Haldeman, and Haldeman very imperiously tried to insist on his point of view, but Scowcroft disagreed with him, and he was a terrier who had got hold of someone's leg and wouldn't let it go. In his polite and mild manner, he insisted on his view, which was correct. It was some procedural matter, but he was challenging Haldeman at the height of Haldeman's power."

At the time, Kissinger was searching for a deputy national-security adviser. "I was looking for someone with character," he said. "I knew a lot of people with intelligence. But I needed a strong person as my deputy, who would be willing to stand up to me if necessary—not every day—but to stand up for what he thought was right." Scowcroft remembered his selection differently. "I heard he wanted me because I was a Mormon," he said. "Mormons were supposed to be loyal and faithful."

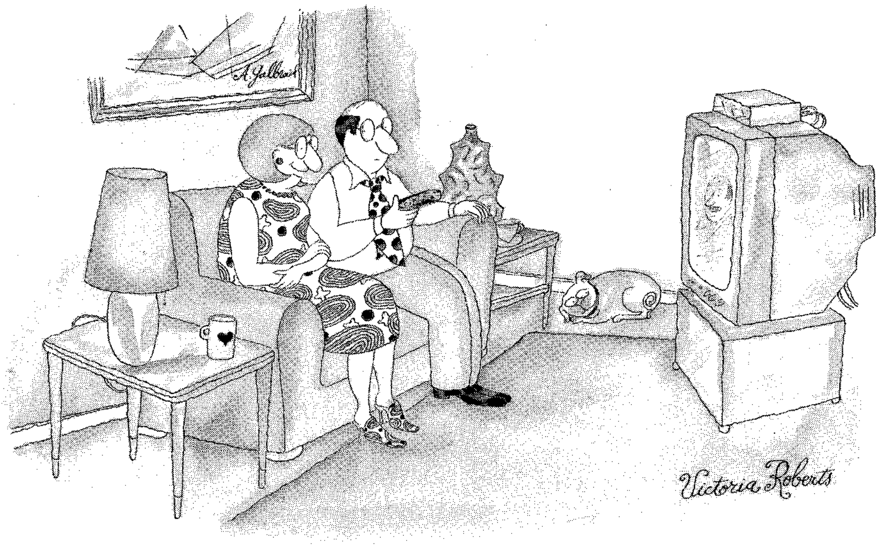
In the nineteen-seventies, as now, the role of morality in the conduct of foreign policy was the subject of considerable debate. During the Nixon and Ford years, the late Washington senator Henry (Scoop) Jackson, a Democrat (many of the leading neoconservatives, such as Wolfowitz, were once Democrats), and one of the fathers of neoconservatism, was battling Kissinger, the advocate of détente, over his approach to the Soviet Union. Jackson, among others, wanted to punish the Soviet Union for its Jewish-emigration policy, and for its persecution of dissidents like Andrei Sakharov; his criticism intensified when Ford and Kissinger, worried about antagonizing the Soviets, snubbed Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn. Ronald Reagan took on these causes when he won the Presidency in 1980, and many dissidents, including Natan Sharansky, who went on to become an Israeli politician, were grateful for his condemnation of the Soviet Union as an "evil empire." Kissinger believed that such confrontations were dangerous to the smooth management of America's relationship with the Soviets.

Scowcroft, who served as President Ford's national-security adviser when Kissinger was Secretary of State, recalled the 1976 primary fight between Reagan and Ford: "It got so bad in the campaign that Ford said he wouldn't use the word 'détente' anymore. The Reagan people excoriated Kissinger—they cast the Soviet Union into outer darkness. Now, I was not fond of the Soviet Union, but I didn't think that calling the Soviet Union the 'evil empire' got anybody anywhere."

This Reagan-era fight was in some ways a dress rehearsal for the fight today between neoconservatives and realists: only the enemy has changed.

During one of our conversations, Scowcroft repeated a saying of Morgenthau's that concerned the overriding importance of "weighing the consequences of alternative political actions." The first Bush Administration, in its four years, weighed these consequences, as it faced several major challenges, and in each instance Bush and Scowcroft chose to apply the lessons of realism, with differing results.

In the case of Iraq, Scowcroft was incensed by Saddam's violation of an international border; he did not believe that Saddam's treatment of his own citizens merited military intervention. A month into the war, Bush, in public comments, encouraged Iraq's defeated military, and also its civilian population, to "take matters into [their] own hands" and to rise up against Saddam. "Here's where we fell down," Robert Gates said recently. "It was our hope that the magnitude of the defeat would lead the Iraqi generals to throw Saddam out, but we didn't anticipate those uprisings. When the Kurds and the Shiites rose up, Saddam won back his generals. We speculated that Saddam 'warned' his generals that, without him, they could not control the uprising, and the country would disintegrate." Gates, who went on to serve as director of the C.I.A. from 1991 to 1993, argued that the President never intended to provoke a popular rebellion. "When the President talked about the Iraqis solving the problem, he was absolutely not urging the Kurds and the Shiites to do it. He was talking about the generals taking him out." In the book that Scowcroft wrote with the elder Bush, a passage



*"You don't really know someone until you give him the remote."*

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about the uprising said, "It is true that we hoped Saddam would be toppled. But we never thought that could be done by anyone outside the military and never tried to incite the general population. It is stretching the point to imagine that a routine speech in Washington would have gotten to the Iraqi malcontents and have been the motivation for the subsequent actions of the Shiites and Kurds." In Wolfowitz's view, Scowcroft, "by overestimating the risk of supporting the rebellions that the U.S. had encouraged, bequeathed to George W. Bush a much more complicated situation ten years later."

The treatment of dissidents was at the root of Scowcroft's most controversial moment as national-security adviser, during a trip to Beijing six months after the massacre of Chinese students near Tiananmen Square. Like much of the world, the Bush Administration was angered by the Chinese government's actions, but it also cautioned prudence. Bush dispatched Scowcroft to carry a message. "After Tiananmen, we were the first ones to crack down, we cracked down hard on anything to do with the military," Scowcroft said, referring to a suspension of weapons sales announced within days of the massacre.

Scowcroft communicated Bush's concerns to the Chinese leadership: "I knew Deng, and I had a wonderful, frank discussion with him, and he said, 'What happened in Tiananmen Square is none of your business—it's a domestic issue, and we do whatever we want,' and I said, 'You're right. It is none of our business. But the consequences of what you did in the world and to our relations are our business. And that's what I'm here to talk about.'"

The trip attracted more notice when Scowcroft was filmed at a banquet toasting the Chinese. "We're having the dinner, and the standard part of every formal Chinese dinner is you have a toast at the end," he said. "Just before the toast, in comes the camera crew. So I've got a choice. Do I turn my back on them and walk out and destroy the purpose of the visit, or do I look like a fool, toasting with the Chinese? And I chose that. I knew how it would look. Our interests and the reason I was there were more important than how it made me look." In 1992, Bill Clinton made the Bush Administration's China policy a campaign issue; by 1994, Clinton had put trade, not human rights, at the center of his China policy—a triumph for realism.

In August of 1991, when the Baltic states were about to break free from Moscow's control and the Soviet Union itself seemed close to dissolution, Bush visited Ukraine. He used the occasion, however, to warn his Kiev audience about the dangers of "suicidal nationalism." He was ridiculed for this speech—it was labelled the "Chicken Kiev" speech—and it did nothing to slow the Soviet republics' momentum toward independence.

Natan Sharansky is now allied with the neoconservative camp, and he cites the Chicken Kiev speech as a typical instance of realist policymaking. A book that he wrote last year, "The Case for Democracy," came to national attention when George W. Bush told the Washington *Times*, "If you want a glimpse of how I think about foreign policy, read Natan Sharansky's book 'The Case for Democracy.' . . . It's a great book."

Sharansky argues that the United States would best serve its own interests by choosing as allies only countries that grant their citizens broad freedoms, because only democracies are capable of living peacefully in the world. In Kiev, "America had missed a golden opportunity," Sharansky wrote in a chapter criticizing the President's father. George H. W. Bush's Administration, he said, "was not the first nor will it be the last to try to stifle democracy for the sake of 'stability.' Stability is perhaps the most important word in the diplomat's dictionary. In its name, autocrats are embraced, dictators are coddled and tyrants are courted."

In September, Sharansky was in Washington at the invitation of Condoleezza Rice; he gave the closing speech at a State Department conference on democratization. "Can you believe it?" he said to me just before the session. "Rice gave the opening speech and I give the closing?" Of his complicated relations with the Bush family, he said, "A few days after my book comes out, I get a call from the White House. 'The President wants to see you.' So I go to the White House and I see my book on his desk. It is open to page 210. He is really reading it. And we talk about democracy. This President is very great on democracy. At the end of the conversation, I say, 'Say hello to your mother and father.' And he said, 'My father?' He looked very surprised I would say this." Sharansky went on, "So I say to the President, 'I like your father. He is very good to my wife when I am in prison.' And President Bush says, 'But what about Chicken Kiev?' " Sharansky smiled as he recounted this story. "The President looked around the room and said, 'Who is responsi-

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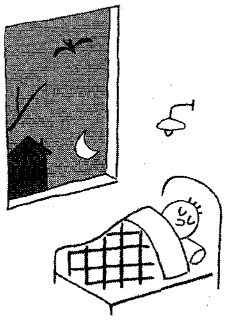
, you have to ask yourself,
w do I get out?' And you
have to ask questions about the national interest." Interventions have consequences, he argues, and Iraq is a case in point. "There are a lot of places in the world where injustice is taking place, and we can't run around and fix all of them."

Democrats like Holbrooke take issue with Republican realists. "Support for American values is part of our national-security interests, and it is realistic to support humanitarian and human-rights interventions," Holbrooke said. Such Democrats differ from the Bush-style interventionists as well, particularly on the value of treaties and the importance of multilateral coöperation, although Holbrooke and Paul Wolfowitz have sounded very much alike at times; Wolfowitz, for instance, strongly supported a military option in Bosnia. "It's important to realize how much can go wrong by doing nothing," he said.

The experience in Iraq seems to have tempered the Administration's impatience with coalition-building. There is more coöperation with America's traditional allies and more willingness to work with other nations—with Europe in countering the nuclear ambitions of Iran, and with China in countering those of North Korea. The Administration, though, remains committed to the export of democracy, and is publicly optimistic about the future in Iraq. Wolfowitz, a leading proponent of the Iraq war, recently said, "Wilson thought you could take a map of Europe and say, 'This is the way things are going to be.' That was unrealistic, but the world has changed a lot in a hundred years. The fact is that people can look around and see the overwhelming success of representative government."



For Scowcroft, the second Gulf war is a reminder of the unwelcome consequences of radical intervention, especially when it is attempted without sufficient understanding of America's limitations or of the history of a region. "I believe in the fallibility of human nature," Scowcroft told me. "We continually step on our best aspirations. We're humans. Given a chance to screw up, we will." ♦

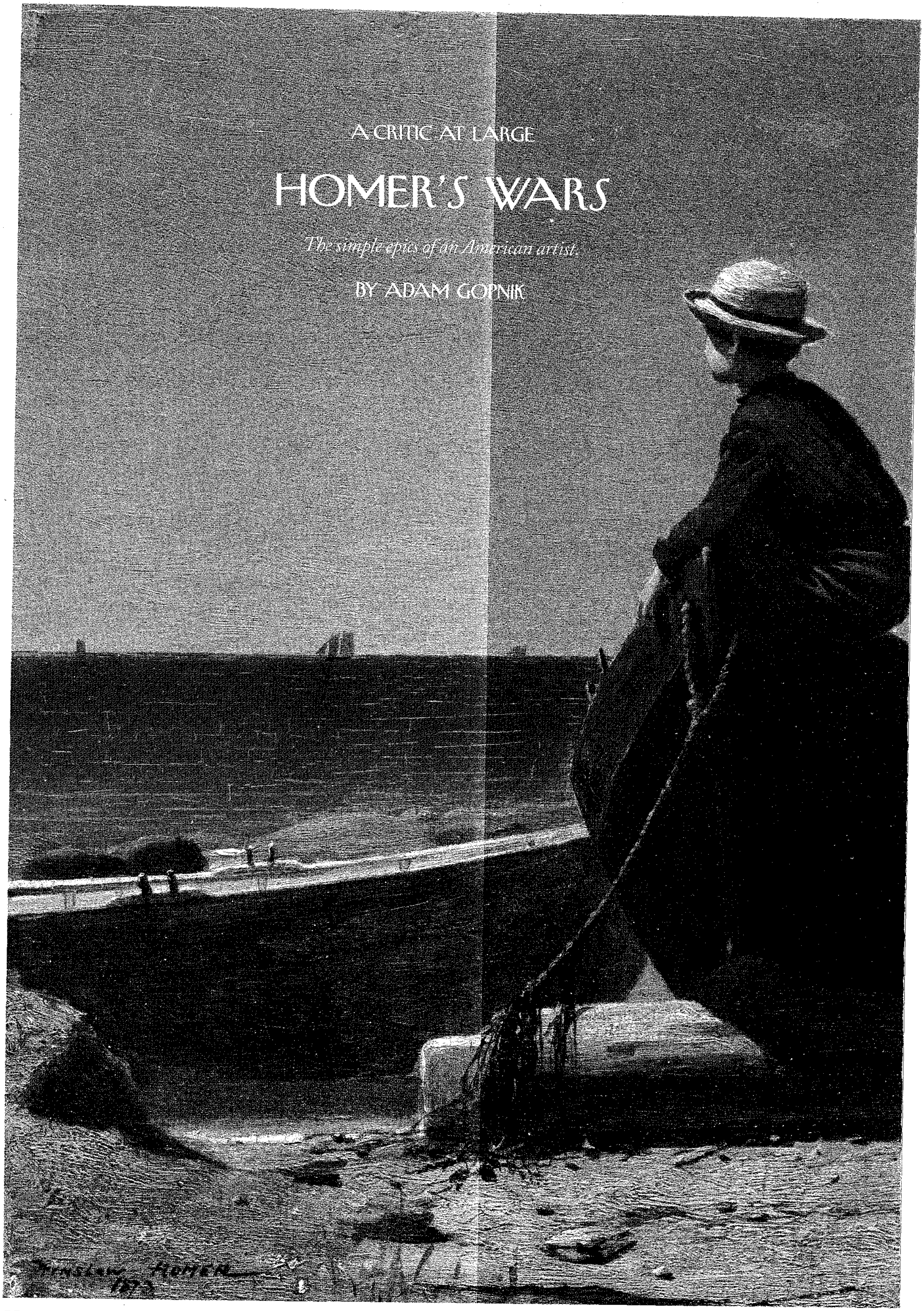
[redacted]

A CRITIC AT LARGE

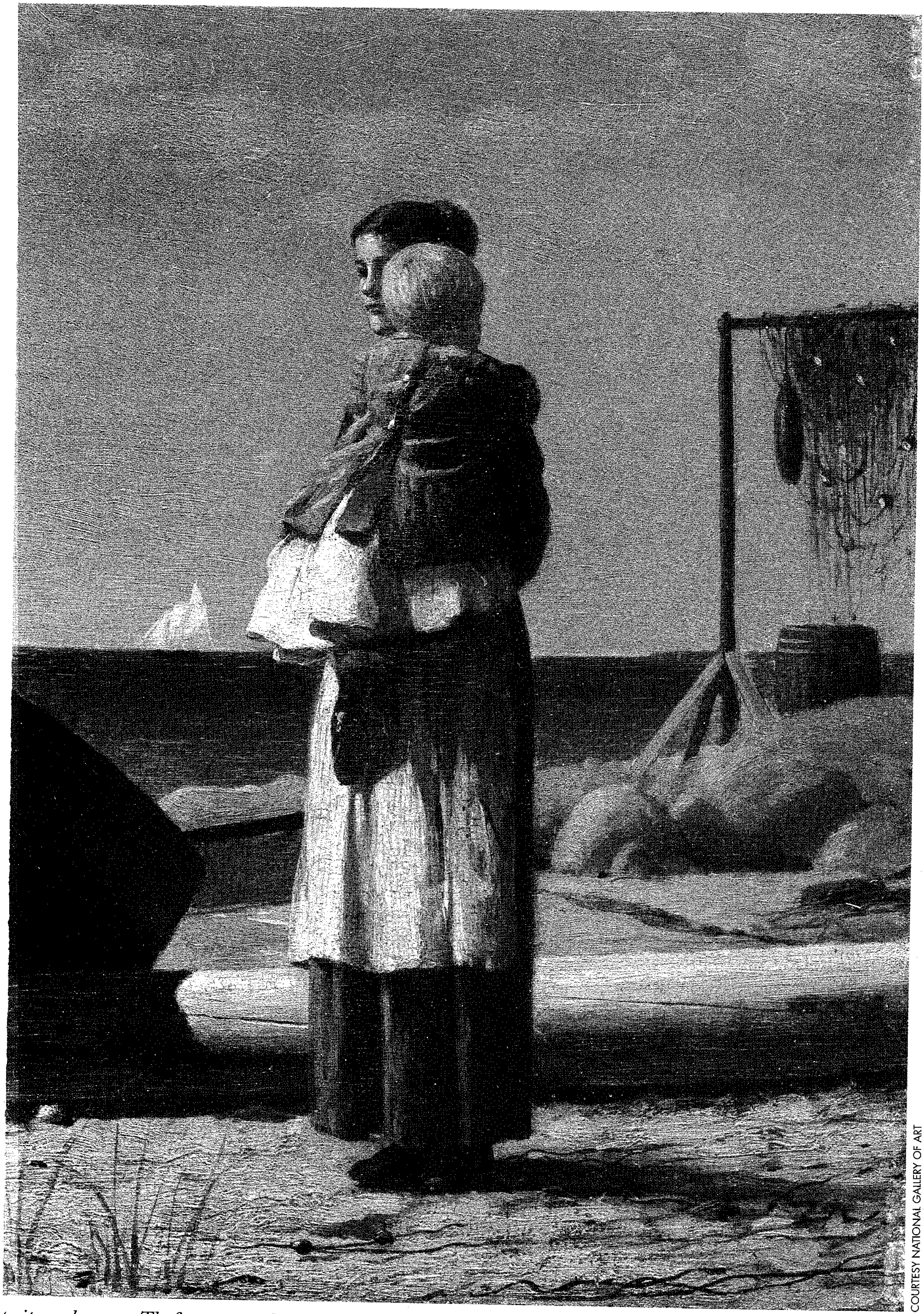
# HOMER'S WARS

*The simple epics of an American artist.*

BY ADAM GOPNIK



*Homer transforms the sentimental construction of "Dad's Coming!" (1873) into something almost Giottesque in its compact em*



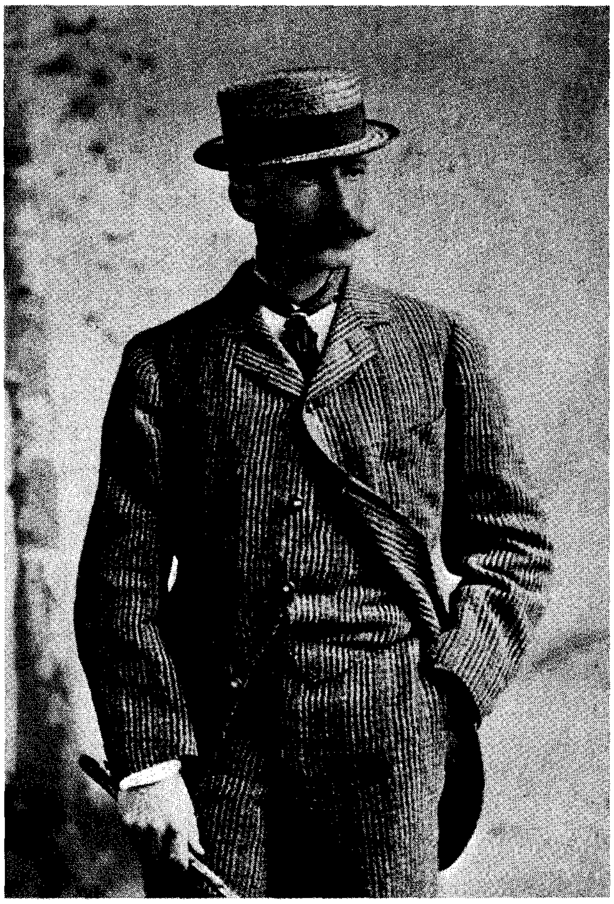
COURTESY NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

*taciturn eloquence. The faces are mostly hidden; backs and hats and space and sails do all the talking.*

The American artist Winslow Homer is back in style, but not yet back in the bigger picture. With the end of the Hundred Years' War of the Real—the battle between abstraction and representation that raged through the twentieth-century art world, and which ended, as all religious wars do, with a truce and a dulled tolerance, the survivors huddled together to watch videos in German *Kunsthalles*—critics can now take pleasure in his work without taking a position on his stature. But in the course of that war Homer got cut off from the main corps of both armies. You couldn't draft him into the prehistory of abstraction, as you could the landscape-and-sunset Luminists, and yet you couldn't attach him to the dark body of significant Expressionist realism, either, as you could his great dark-and-crazy contemporary Thomas Eakins.

Instead, Homer got attached not to American art but to Americana, to a regionalist tradition in its most rural and nostalgic aspects: sailboats off the Massachusetts shore in summer and storms with picturesque palm trees in Key West, Maine getaways and Adirondack trout—the full Abercrombie & Fitch aesthetic. (The *old* Abercrombie & Fitch aesthetic.) The National Gallery has launched a retrospective of Homer's work, and has made for the occasion a giant banner of a small watercolor of a schoolmarm posed before a blackboard chalked with simple geometric shapes. It looks like the perfect *Saturday Evening Post* cover.

Yet, if Homer is certainly a part of Americana, he is also something more. Seen closely, that schoolmarm—in her monochrome harmonies, her beautiful gray chic, her Manet-ish flatness, and the knowing play between the dumb obvious shapes she must teach and her own simmering, sexy figure—out-Whistlers Whistler, who never painted a portrait as witty or as surely shaped. Homer was no rube. For more than twenty years, he lived in Manhattan and found his subjects there—he was the first major artist to grasp Central Park as a subject—and a *séjour* in Paris in 1867 probably helped alter and create his style. If we're to return him to the command of American art, it might be as a more urbane and cosmopolitan figure than he is usually allowed to be, an artist first and an American second.


*Homer in 1880, before he withdrew from the world.*

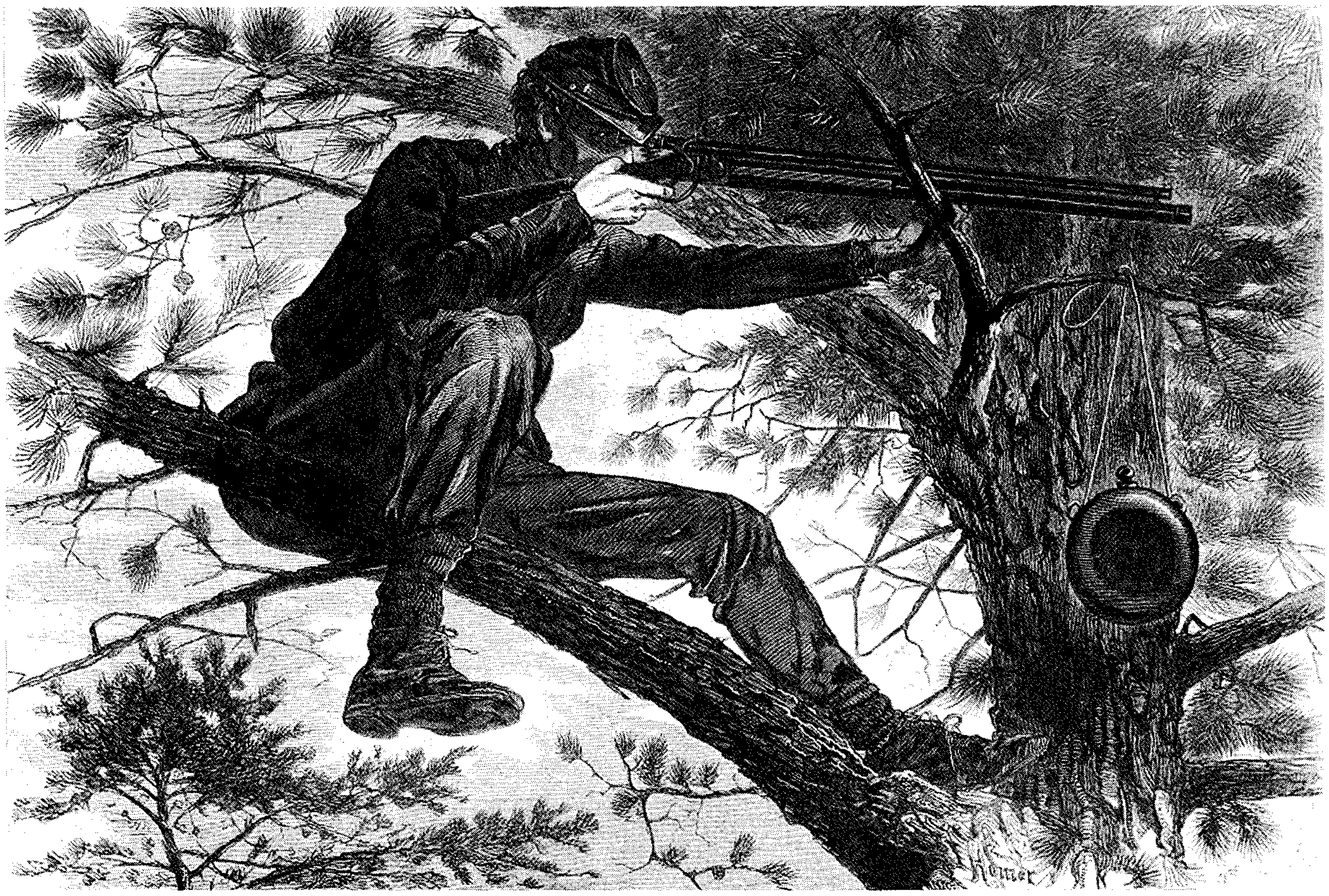
NAPOLEON SARONY/COURTESY BOWDOIN COLLEGE MUSEUM OF ART; COURTESY NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

Homer came of age suddenly, in the Civil War. Born in Massachusetts in 1836, he knew early that he wanted to be an artist. He came from a middle-class family in Boston. His older brother, Charles, to whom he was devoted, was a Harvard man, a chemist, and an industrialist, and one has a strong feeling that he was, on the Boston model, the real success of the family, where Winslow was the oddball. The family was self-consciously respectable: secure enough to insist on its superiority and give Homer an easy sense of entitlement, insecure enough to watchfully oversee his biography after his death. Some of his later bearishness and emphatic Yankee skepticism must derive from his desire to show his family that he wasn't *that* kind of artist, but that other kind—an artisan more than an aesthete.

He knew what he wanted. Art cultures get deprovincialized by determination as much as by anything; the ambition is almost as good as the act. Seeing an ordinary French painting on exhibit, the young Homer announced that he was going to paint: "Something like that, only a damn sight better." He went to work in Boston as an apprentice lithographer, learning the basics of mechanical reproduction, and though he seems to have hated the drudgery and sheer mechanical insistence of it, he ended up with an easy, unexcitable sense of the translation and transmission between painting and printing, a bit like a contemporary artist as much at home with CGI as with a pencil.

He arrived in Manhattan in 1859 and, when the war broke out, quickly went to the front as an illustrator for *Harper's Weekly*, the *Life* of its day. He was, from the first, a plainspoken man who felt at home with soldiers and their officers—the model of an embedded journalist. In that first year of the war, he produced a lot of standard wish-fulfillment military scenes, charges and flag-waving resistance, copied implicitly from old battle art. In the early, showily Napoleonic phase of the war, he seems to have spent time with the Zouave regiments of the Army of the Potomac, who wore red pantaloons, red fezzes, and blue collarless jackets. (Homer kept the fez, and wore it on occasion throughout his life.)

Then, in the latter half of 1862, something remarkable happened: in two images—"The Army of the Potomac—A Sharpshooter on Picket Duty" and "The Surgeon at Work at the Rear During an Engagement"—he moved past patriotic rhetoric to provide what are among the first glimpses of modern battle as it really is. "A Sharpshooter," a woodcut made after a painting, shows a Union rifleman snuggled in a tree, all alone, weapon poised, waiting for his target as nervously as a boy with a slingshot waits for a songbird. His face is reduced, as so often in Homer, to a single watching eye. The image was meant to convey the same emotions that we might feel looking at machine gunners feeding belts of bullets into their guns: an image of a cold-blooded dealer of mechanized death. It "struck me as being as near murder as anything I could think of in connection with the army," Homer wrote later, in an uncharacteristic outburst. Whenever he thought about the sharpshooters, he said, he felt a sense of "horror." These days, Homer's sharpshooter, having been superseded by so many images of other brutalities, can look almost quaintly virtuous, an admirable Yankee soldier, thrifty with his ammunition. We don't quite get Homer's horror until we realize that the emotion is meant to come from the very Homeresque removal of overcharge. The mechanization of war has unhorsed one of the four riders of the apocalypse and put him up in a tree to take target practice on men.



*"The Army of the Potomac—A Sharpshooter on Picket Duty" (1862) provides one of the first glimpses of modern battle as it really is.*

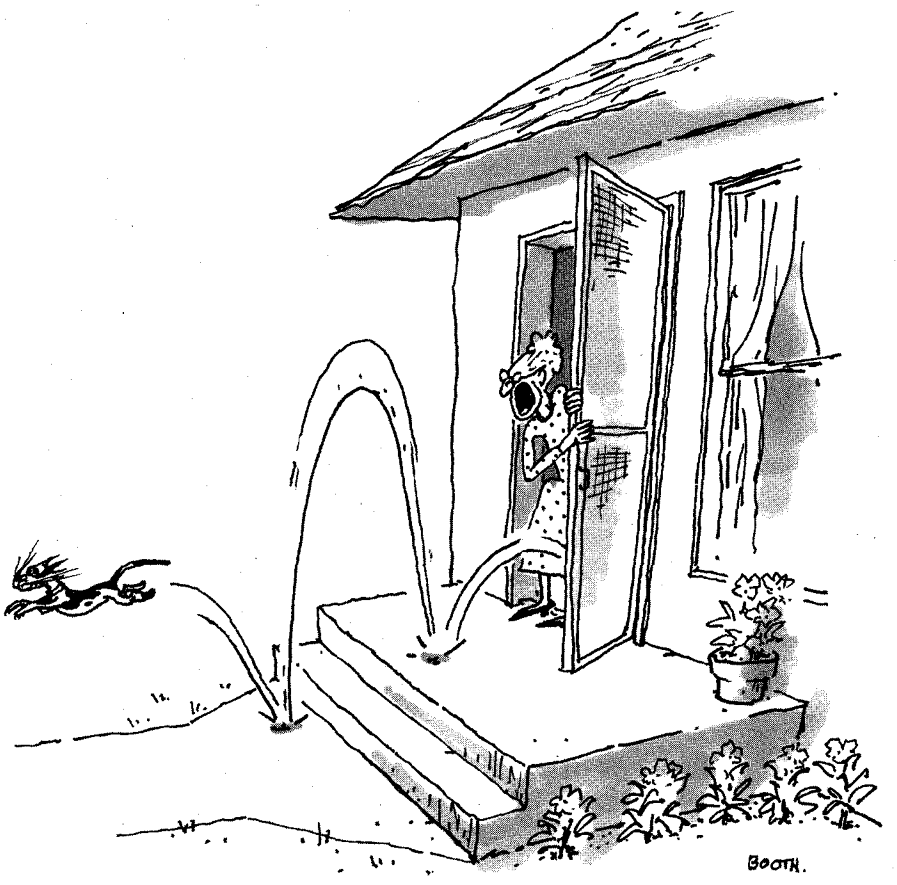
The related image, "The Surgeon at Work," shows the human effects of the new kind of death-dealing. The treatment of the wounded here isn't the work of benevolent ladies with lamps in sombre hospitals but the labor of a hard-pressed surgeon. The surgeon himself is pushed to the far left of the design, as his hands pass over a wounded man's body. The center of the image is taken up by a soldier from whose knapsack another attendant removes bandages. This central, witnessing soldier stares right out at us, face flat, eyes fixed and one hand resting on his overcoat—a stoical witness of everyday agony, a figure of pain as mordant as anything in Goya.

The woodblock prints that *Harper's Weekly* published from Homer's designs during the next decade are, to modern taste, perhaps the most appealing work of anything he did. Many of his greatest images were executed in parallel as woodcut prints and as paintings, and, surprisingly often, the prints have more of the reduced essence of his talent than the paintings do. In fact, one often has a not-quite-admissible sensation that Homer is better in woodcut than he is in oil, better in black-and-white paraphrase than in the colored original. His strengths—his feeling for ample emotive form, and his uncanny ability to make the space between figures resonate with a plaintive, keening emotion—are forward, and his weakness, a lack of painterly know-how that tended to make him overwork his surfaces and muddy his points, invisible. He went back and forth between New York pleasures and modern combat, and many of the New York woodblocks are of recreation taken in the brand-new Central Park—his skating scenes are still the best pictures that the Park has produced.

The quiet, haunting spell the woodcuts cast is, in part, a gift from the medium. It is hard to find a really ugly woodcut in all of *Harper's Weekly* in the eighteen-sixties and seventies. There's an instinctive elegance to the black-and-white-and-gray linearism, patches of sun and shade built up from an obvious code of visible line. Still, Homer is working on an entirely different level from any of his colleagues: in his grasp of space, his instinctive feeling for classical design, and his telegraphic gift for conveying emotion. Feeling—loss, longing, fear, elation, an animal's panic at its own approaching death and a skater's envy of her sister skater's ribboned hat—is as instantly conveyed in Homer as it is in the work of the painters of the Quattrocento, and by the same cunning of emotion produced by compressing the signs of it. Homer instinctively sensed the force of still understatement, the dramatic moment achieved by being underdramatized.

The principle of the silent soldier is one that Homer never forgets. No open mouths, no dying falls, no echoes of the Dying Gaul or of the Laocoön, not even a wrinkled or worried face. When he has a duck to kill, the duck dies with a glaring angry eye, and the mourning (like the killing) is left to us. Faces are hidden, hats hide eyes, children hide mothers: he is the master of the *profil perdu*—a shirt back becomes the Rorschach blot onto which the viewer projects the pain. Henry James's famous complaint about the thinness of American experience applies here; Homer's people *are* thin. When a Manet woman reads a book, she is situated within a city and a whole set of social relations defined by the hat she wears, the train behind her, all conjuring a social world of ambivalent attitudes as perfectly as a page of Proust. When a Homer girl reads a book, she is a bored American girl reading a book. But it is the thinness of transparency; we see what's going on in his people's lives in an instant.

In "Dad's Coming!" (1873), for instance, a small boy sits high on an upturned boat, scanning the vast Gloucester harbor for the tiny sight of his father's returning boat. (It's just visible in the upper left.) His back is turned toward us, while his mother and her baby stand like a single pillar of apprehension to the far right. The thing is "synthetic"—the boy began life as an isolated figure from a watercolor, and his mother and sister were flown in to join him only later—and entirely "literary"; in *Harper's* it accompanies a bad poem about the returning father. Yet Homer transforms the sentimental construction into something almost Giottesque in its compact emotion and taciturn eloquence. The children's faces are hidden, and only the mother's single eye speaks directly of the anxiety and relief that radiate from the picture. Backs and hats and space and sails do all the talking.



"*Abstinence!*"

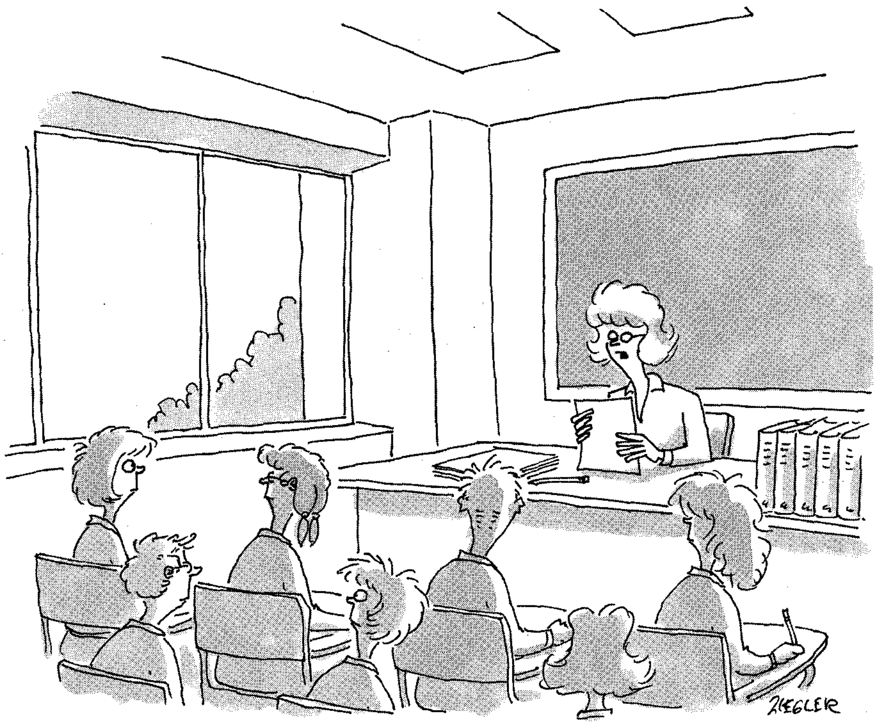
In making an art so richly laconic, Homer was, in ways often denied, one of the first American painters to participate in the revolution in French art which had begun in the eighteen-sixties. Even within the excellence of early Homer woodcuts, a dividing line can be found. In 1868, they begin to have a command of form that makes everything else around them look chatty and diffuse. The shift is from an artist who still thinks in terms of anecdotal detail to one who thinks in terms of expressive pattern and shape, who welcomes weirdness of pose, and searches it out. In " 'Winter'—A Skating Scene" (1868), his girls are not spread out in a graceful whip but pressed hard in on each other, as in a discarded snapshot where everyone's face has come out "wrong," with a felt contradiction between the girls' dressed-up elegance and their awkward physical effort. In the stylization, there's a certain clear-grasped ugliness, a reaction against obvious beauty.

What happened? Homer spent much of 1867 in Paris. Most Homer historians make insistently little of his trip to France. Aside from a wonderful drawing of the Louvre galleries, no records exist of what art he saw and where he saw it, and there's a general sense that, given his contacts and given his French, he could at most have skimmed the surface of the advanced art there. The resemblances in compression and decorative simplification between his work and that of his great French contemporaries—the whole aesthetic of abbreviation that he pursued—are, in this view, merely resemblances, owing to a common cause rather than a common source.

Almost fifty years ago, however, a Metropolitan Museum curator named Albert Ten Eyck Gardner, in a now obscure catalogue essay accompanying a long-forgotten show, made a persuasive case for the significance of Homer's time in France. Gardner, sharp-eyed and forceful, maintained that it was absurd to "believe that a young American artist, a practiced draftsman and professional illustrator, could go from the tame little provincial New York art world to stay in Paris for almost a year and to imagine that this sojourn in the world capital of art had no effect upon him as an artist." Artists get what they need not through diligent study but through their eyes and fingers; to skim the surface is quite enough, since what they need is right there on it.

In particular, Gardner pointed out, 1867 was the year of the second Universal Exposition there (Homer had two pictures in the American pavilion), whose great event was the official participation of the Japanese and the first full explosion of *japonisme,* beyond even the existing craze for Japanese prints. The crucial elements of Homer's mature style—the appetite for the isolated figure, the search for truth of pose even at the price of obvious grace, the love of aberrant perspectives, the marriage of sharp observation and decorative patterning—are all part of an aesthetic that derived, Gardner thought, from Manet's idea of Japanese art. Some of Homer's finest late watercolors—his leaping trout, for instance—could almost be taken from Hiroshige, while one of his most moving compositions, the wave-bound "Kissing the Moon," is a direct quotation from Hokusai. As Gardner beautifully says, Homer "transformed story-action into color-pattern at one glance." (Even the most vociferous scoffers at the notion of a Paris-transformed Homer now concede that he became self-consciously Japanized, though they claim that it happened later, in Boston, in the eighteen-eighties.)

Very early, in the eighteen-seventies, Homer's color also got very bright. It seems unlikely that Homer could have absorbed this kind of high-keyed color first-hand from the Parisian source, but he certainly couldn't have got there just by copying earlier French realist painting of the kind we know he liked; the Barbizon School painters, often cited as Homer favorites, are dark painters, all leaf and forest. The kind of high-keyed color we see in Impressionist painting is, anyway, not just a consequence of painting in the open air, of standing outside and painting what you see, since you could just as well see cloud and shadow. The bright color of Monet is an idea about how joy looks, before it is an observation about how light falls. It was an idea that spread, as ideas do, from artist to artist, and somehow it got to Homer. By 1878, Homer's watercolors—particularly his pastoral watercolors of children playing on Houghton Farm—are as white-lit and bleached and high-afternoon as Monet, though more conventionally rendered, and it is hard to believe that he had not seen something or someone who turned him on and turned his color up. Whatever the source, American painting suddenly had a license, never since revoked, to make American light as transparent and reflective as a beach in sunshine at high noon.



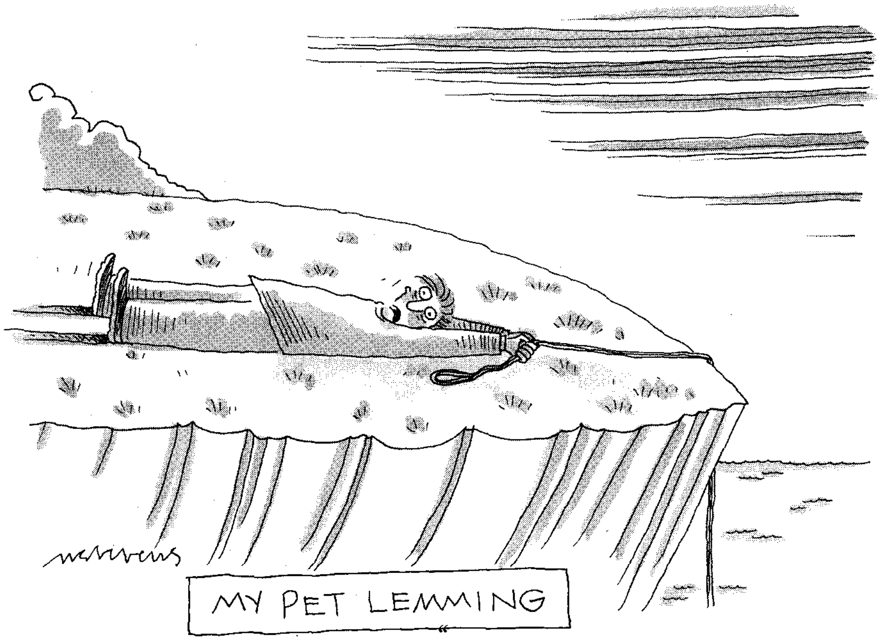
*"I wonder, Cyndee, whether your parents are aware of this week's spelling of your name."*

• •

After his return to New York, Homer seems to have spent more than a decade leading a largely happy and sociable bohemian life in what was then, if not exactly a cultural capital, a place sufficiently abundant to have rooms for young artists to live in and reasons for young artists to live. He still worked hard for the illustrated magazines, and began to show more and more of his paintings in exhibitions. There are nice anecdotes of Homer's life in New York—he kept a studio on Washington Square for a while, and then in a famous studio building on Tenth Street. He gave drawing lessons to a younger colleague at *Harper's Weekly,* emphasizing the importance of studying ordinary single objects—shoes and top hats—not just to get their shapes right, in the academic manner, but to get the feelings they evoked right, too. "You should practice drawing old shoes and getting their character," he advised.

His nickname in an artists' club was the Obtuse Bard, and though this was partly a joke on his name, it also had to do with an enigmatic quality that people sensed in him: the work was grave and humorous, newsily contemporary and yet deeply reticent. In an ambivalent account of Homer's art in 1875, the young Henry James both registered what was "radical" in Homer and rejected it as too crudely national—without stopping to reflect that Homer's realist appetite was very like that of the French naturalist writers with whom James was already impressed. James wrote:

> Homer goes in, as the phrase is, for perfect realism, and cares not a jot for such fantastic hair-splitting as the distinction between



> beauty and ugliness. He is a genuine painter; that is, to see, and to reproduce what he sees is his only care.... He is almost barbarously simple, and, to our eye, he is horribly ugly; but there is nevertheless something one likes about him. What is it? [He] naturally sees everything at one with its envelope of light and air. He sees not in lines, but in masses, in gross, broad masses. Things come already modeled to his eye. If his masses were only sometimes a trifle more broken, and his brush a good deal richer—if it had a good many more secrets and mysteries and coquetries, he would be, with his vigorous way of looking and seeing, even if fancy in the matter remained the same dead blank, an almost distinguished painter.

Homer, by James's own eyesight, had to a greater degree than any other American painter the vital realist faith—to show things as they are rather than as we would wish them to be—and had understood the visual revolution of seeing and describing in area rather than in line. Yet James's plea for Homer's masses to be more "broken" and richer is basically a plea for Homer to be a more conventional kind of virtuoso slathering it on. Peering at Homer's essentially European and advanced virtues, James assigns them to his backward and American nature—a sign of a fatal "blankness of fancy" and barbarous simplicity.

In the early eighties, Homer began that withdrawal from the world which has by now become part of his legend. There is evidence—it is well summed up in Miles Unger's fine study "The Watercolors of Winslow Homer"—that he had, at some point in the mid-seventies, an unhappy love affair, and that it helped drive him toward his later reclusive ways. Certainly, a particular female type begins to recur in his work. The girl, a slightly sulky reddish-blonde—she's the schoolmarm in the schoolmarm picture—does seem to be the symbol of an attachment. She is seen with a caressing intimacy that feels quite rapt, whether the infatuation is with her or with some other actual woman for whom she is merely the model.

For almost the only time in his career, Homer made a few images that are frankly romantic, even erotic. There is, for instance, the sublime watercolor "Moonlight," from 1874, a seascape nocturne with the moon overhead shining on the waves. (Homer had perfect pictorial pitch; the same silver-blue-white light and reflection can be seen on a Massachusetts beach at night now.) A man, who looks like Homer, is paying court to a girl; she holds a fan and turns shyly away from him; she would rather look at the moonlight, this eloquent side view says, than listen. It is, of course, a standard romantic image, but Homer was not a standard romantic-image maker, and it suggests a genuinely felt story of love and loss.

After an early-eighties stay on the seacoast of England, where the flat, drizzly landscape failed to excite his imagination—mostly he made disappointingly Millet-like pictures of net-menders and sailors—he came home and slowly narrowed his orbit. It is from this period that the standard image of Homer, the hermit of the seacoast, dates. His haunts were in fact more varied: Prout's Neck, in Maine, for the seacoast, the Adirondacks for the fishing, and Key West, the Bahamas, and Cuba as a winter paradise. His haunts, and his attitudes, uncannily anticipate Hemingway's, with the Adirondacks substituting for Michigan as the happy hunting ground. The dignity of the hunt, the beauty of fatality, the mystical (or mystified) relationship of hunter and prey: all these things which one associates with Hemingway's stoical vision are part of Homer's, too. Like Hemingway's, Homer's view of life was decided by his experience of war, and he was drawn ambivalently to elemental physical pleasures both as an escape from the horror of human conflict and as a kind of poetic symbol of it. The hunter in the woods is both a version of the sharpshooter and a way of making sharpshooting into something decently purposeful.

And, as with the writer, Homer's extreme sensitivity to physical experience, and his ability to register that experience in a few daubs, demanded a small form in which he could work big. He found it in watercolor, which effectively did for him what the woodcut had done: it simplified and "classicized" his composition. Homer took on a watercolor tradition that had been merely washy and picturesque, and gave it bone and muscle. There is scarcely a "finished" painting of Homer's in the eighties and nineties that is not bettered by the watercolors related to it: in the finished "Hound and Hunter," the stream turns into an overdone Courbetian mess, where it registers in a few decisive washes of neutral color in the preparatory watercolor.

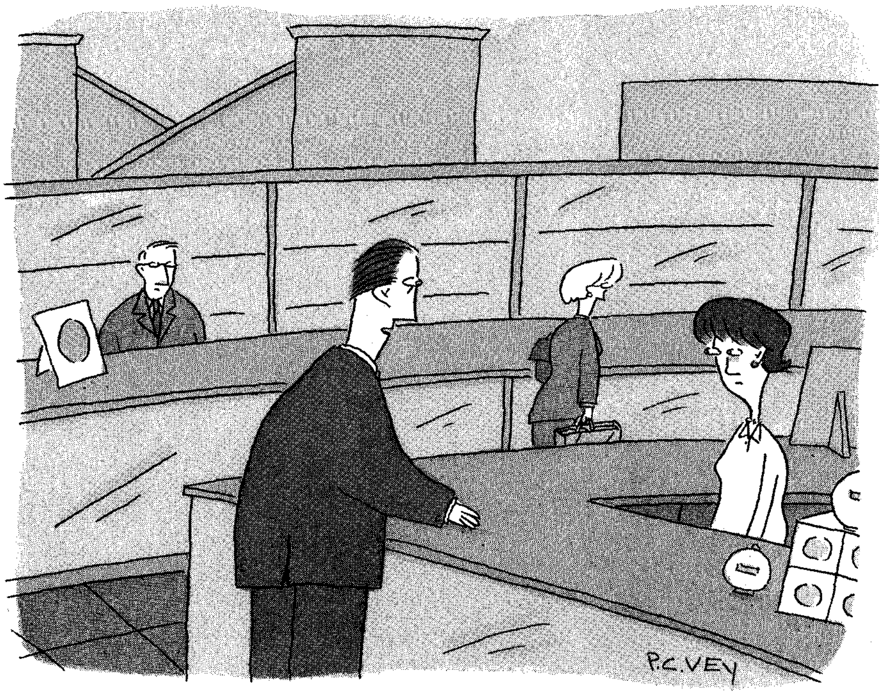
Irritability is the besetting sin of aging artists, as garrulousness is that of aging writers, and it is from these years that the familiar anecdotes of Homer as the hermit painter date: he put a sign up reading "Snakes! Mice!" to keep inquisitive ladies away from his outdoor easel, and he insisted, again and again, that he had been cheated by the critics and was ready to give up painting entirely and live with the fishermen. A few years before his death, in 1910, he wrote to his nephew on a trip to Florida that he had "an idea at present of doing some work but do not know how long that will last. At any rate I will once more have a good feed of goat flesh and smoke some good cigars & catch some red Snappers."

Yet by the end of his purposefully solitary life Homer had achieved at least three finished paintings that can stand alongside any European art of the same time. They are the famous dying ducks of "Right and Left," in the National Gallery; the magical 1893 "Fox Hunt," at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts; and, at the Metropolitan, the 1901 "Searchlight on Harbor Entrance," the stark view of a single cannon on a Cuban parapet, the artilleryman's answer to the sharpshooter's horror. All feature a single thing or a pair of things, seen as intently as a saint on an icon, and all take as their subject death: death striking the two ducks out of an early-morning sky, death waiting for an exhausted fox in the form of the crows that coolly watch its last march, and death portended in the nighttime cannon surveying the harbor. All are *japonaise* in their flat, decorative high-keyed intensity and their aberrant perspectives—in "Right and Left" we are lofted up into the air alongside the birds as they die; in "Fox Hunt" we are somehow right on top of the exhausted fox. In "Right and Left" we can actually just see the hunter, far below, his face hidden by the blast of his shotgun, as phantasmal as one of the "hidden" figures in the Zapruder film. Both the fox and the ducks are paraphrases of Audubon, but in Audubon one duck died as its partner watched in a kind of dumb disbelief, where in Homer everyone is killed, and there is no one there to care.

There is a kernel of something new and his own in Homer. His admirers try to modernize him by making his seemingly simple storytelling sublimate deeper emotions, so that, as one historian puts it, his "straightforward narratives serve deeper and richer purposes." This is so, but surely what we value in Homer is that he reminds us how deep and rich the effects of straightforward narrative can be in pictures if it is made simple enough. Narrative in writing can take any amount of digression, because we read in sequence and over time, but a single stray incident in painting spoils the whole, which arrives all at once, in a moment of vision. Homer is at his best as a storyteller, and his real genius lies not in sublimation but in abbreviation: he has the gift, perhaps not so weird in the land that invented Morse code, for telling a big story in a minimum number of pulses. He is definitive. Looking at a Homer watercolor of a single leaping silver trout, one feels not "There's more here than meets the eye" but "There's nothing more to be said on that."

Homer's ability to tell a story with a few stock figures (the boy, the American nymph) leads in one way to something small, to Pyle and Wyeth and the school of Brandywine illustrators. But it also leads to something big. Edward Hopper's formulas (the laconic parable); his line (those slightly wooden but affecting academic columns, slope-shouldered and impassive mannequins); his color (the French brightness inflected by shadow); and even his emotional tone (unexplained stillness producing inexplicable sadness) are all Homer's, and descend from him. The bright sky and the long shadow, the still figure staring out into the plaintive middle distance, not in reverie but merely waiting, for Dad or the duck—it hardly matters.

Homer remained, in part, a reporter, an observer, and an illustrator. But has there ever been an important or original style of American realism that didn't have its roots in journalism? Whereas journalism in France means partisan passion, and in England a kind of organized seediness, in America it meant the first stirrings of an objectivity of telling that could, in an artist's hand, become an objectivity of tone. The flat statement, the mere view, the thing seen and registered rather than prettified and sold—all this comes to the man whose first responsibility is to some idea of fact, whose realism begins in an assignment and ends only in art. That "blankness of fancy" which troubled James in Homer's art is a deliberate discipline, and, set down straight, blossoms as another kind of fancifulness. Eakins buries his emotions in a melancholy murk; Homer raises his into a shining lucid sadness. Among the masters of this American transformation of fact into art, Homer is our Homer, first and best. ♦



*"I'm looking for a fragrance I can wear when my wife's not around."*

FICTION

# THE CHILDREN

### BY WILLIAM TREVOR

"We must go now," Connie's father said, and Connie didn't say anything.

The two men stood with their shovels, hesitating. Everyone else, including Mr. Crozier, who had conducted the funeral service, had gone from the graveside. Cars were being started or were already being eased out of where they were parked, close to the church wall on the narrow road.

"We have to go, Connie," her father said.

Connie felt in the pocket of her coat for the scarf ring and thought for a moment she had lost it, but then she felt the narrow silver band. She knew it wasn't silver, but they had always pretended. She leaned forward to drop it onto the coffin and took the hand her father held out to her. By the churchyard gate they caught up with the last of the mourners, Mrs. Archdale and the elderly brothers Arthur and James Dobbs.

"You'll come to the house," her father invited them in case an invitation hadn't already been passed on to them. But people knew: the cars that were slipping away were all going in the same direction, to the house three and a quarter miles away, still just within the townland of Fara.

Connie would have preferred this to be different. She would have liked the house to be quiet now and had imagined, this afternoon, her father and herself gathering up her mother's belongings, arranging them in whatever way the belongings of the dead usually were arranged, her father explaining how they should be as they went along. She had thought of them alone after the funeral, doing all this because it was the time for it, because that was something you felt.

Her mother's dying, and the death itself, had been orderly and anticipated. Connie had known for months that it would come, for weeks that she would throw her scarf ring onto the coffin at the very last minute. "Brown Thomas's," her mother had said when she was asked where the ring had been bought, and had given it to Connie because she didn't want it herself anymore. This afternoon, in the quiet bedroom, there would be other things: familiar brooches, familiar earrings, and clothes and shoes, of course; odds and ends in drawers. But she and her father were up to that.

"All right, Connie?" he asked, turning left instead of taking the Knocklofty road, which was the long way round.

There'd been no pain; that had been managed well. While she was at the hospice, and when she came home at the end, because suddenly she wanted to, you could tell that there had been no pain. "Because we prayed for that, I suppose," Connie had said when everything was over, and her father said he supposed so, too. More important than anything it was that there had been no pain.

"Oh, I'm O.K.," she said.

"They have to come to the house. They won't stay long."

"I know."

"You've been a strength, Connie."

He meant it. He himself had been the source of strength at first and had seen her through that time, before she began to give back what he had given her. She had adored her mother.

"She would want us to be hospitable," he said, saying too much.

"I know we have to be."

Connie was eleven and had her mother's faded-blue eyes, and hair the color of cornstalks, as her mother's had been, too. The freckles on her forehead and on the bridge of her nose were a feature of her own.

"We can get down to it when they've gone," she said as they drove on, past the two cottages where nobody lived, down the hill that suddenly became almost dark, beech foliage meeting overhead. Mrs. Archdale had been given a lift by the Dobbs brothers, their red Ford Escort already turning in at the gates. On the uneven surface of the avenue other cars were progressing cautiously, watched by the fenced sheep on either side.

"Come in, come in," Connie's father invited the mourners who had already left their cars and were conversing in quiet tones on the gravel in front of the house. He was a tall, thin man, dark hair beginning to go gray, a boniness distinguishing his features. Sombrely dressed today, he was quite notably handsome. He had known much longer than his child had that his wife was going to die, but always at first there had been hope of a kind. Connie had been told when there was none.

The hall door wasn't locked. He'd left it so, wanting people to go in as soon as they arrived, but no one had. He pushed it open and stood aside. All of them would know the way and Mrs. O'Daly would be there, tea made.

When Teresa was left by her husband she'd felt humiliated by the desertion. "You'll have them to yourself," he'd said—with ersatz gentleness, she considered. "I promise you I won't be a nuisance about that." He spoke of their two children, whom she had always believed were fonder of him than they were of her. And it seemed wrong that they should be deprived of him; in her lowness at the time she had even said so, had felt she should be punished further for her failure to keep a marriage together, should lose them, too. "Oh no," he had protested. "No, I would never do that."

Among the mourners in the drawing room, she remembered that with poignancy, wondering if the pain of death so early in a marriage left behind the same cruel rawness that did not change and lingered for so long. "I'm sorry," she said when Connie's father put a hand on her arm and murmured that she was good to have come. "I'm awfully sorry, Robert," she said again, murmuring also.

She knew him as Connie's father, her own daughter, Melissa, being Connie's particular friend. She didn't know him well; more often than not he wasn't there when she brought Melissa to spend the day at the farm. She had liked Connie's mother but had never had much of a conversation with her, they being different kinds of people, and the house was a busy place. During all the years Teresa had known the house no one was employed to help in it, as no one was—except for odd days during the summer—on the farm itself. Teresa had guessed that the present bleak occasion would be in the hands of Mrs. O'Daly, who in her capable countrywoman's way would have offered to see to things. She was the one who poured the tea now, cups and saucers laid out on a table that didn't belong in the drawing room. O'Daly, a small, scuttling man who worked on the roads and took on anything else he could get, was handing round plates of biscuits and egg sandwiches.

"He did it very well," someone remarked to Teresa. "Your rector did."

"Yes, he did."

A couple she couldn't place, whose way of referring to Mr. Crozier suggested they weren't of the locality, nodded a nervous confirmation. Teresa thought she probably would even have known them if they'd come out from Clonmel. Yes, Mr. Crozier did funerals well, she said.

"We're distant cousins," the woman said. "A generation back."

"I live quite near."

"It's lovely here."

"Quiet," the man said. "You'd notice the quiet."

"We didn't know until we picked up the *Irish Times*," the woman said. "Well, we'd lost touch."

"Saddens us now, of course." The man nodded that into place. "To have lost touch."

"Yes."

Teresa was forty-one, still pretty, her round face brightened by a smile that came easily and lingered, as if it belonged to these features in a way as permanent as they were themselves. Her reddish hair was cut quite short; she had to watch her weight and adamantly did so. She shook her head when O'Daly pressed his plate of bourbon creams on her.

"We drove over," the woman she was in conversation with imparted. "From Mitchelstown."

"Good of you to come."

They deprecated that, and Teresa looked around. When she woke that morning she'd found herself wondering if her husband would be here, if he'd drive down from Dublin, since the death would have shocked him. But among the mourners in the drawing room she didn't see him. It seemed quite a sparse attendance in the large, ordinarily furnished room, for not everyone who'd been at the church had come. But Teresa knew her husband hadn't been at the church, either. It was years now since they'd met; he'd ceased to bother with his children as soon as other children were born to him. As good as his word about not being a nuisance, Teresa supposed.

Afterward, when everyone had gone, Connie helped the O'Dalys to clear up and when that was done the O'Dalys went, too. She and her father did what her mother had requested then, taking her things from the wardrobe and the dressing-table drawers, disposing of them as she had wished, her charities remembered. It was late before all that was completed, before Connie and her father sat together in the kitchen. He poached their eggs when they'd decided to have eggs. He asked her to watch the toast. "We'll manage," he said.

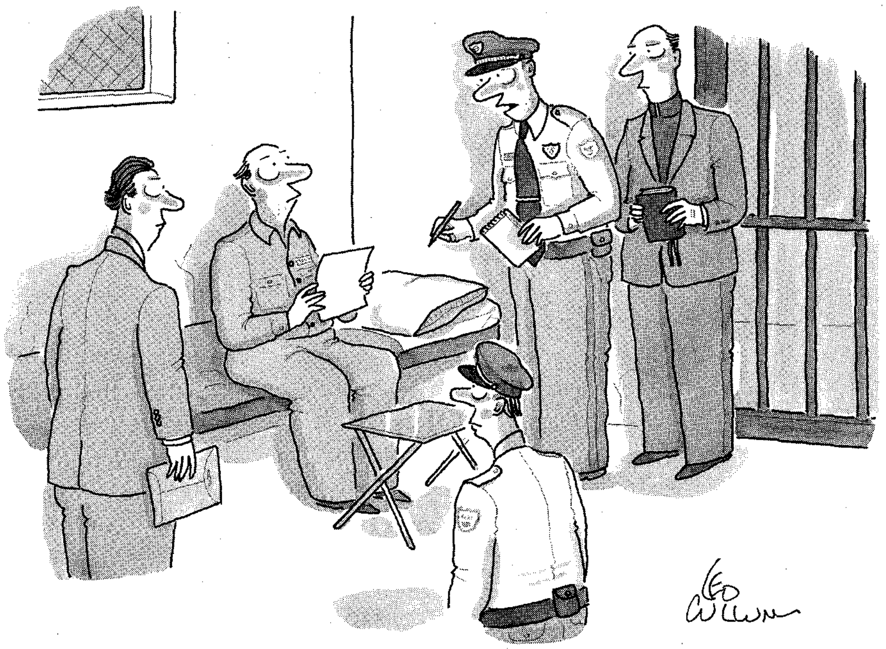
The farm had come to Robert when he married, introducing him to a way of life he had not sought and which he did not imagine he would take to. In fact, he did, and over the years transformed the farm his wife had not long ago inherited and turned it from a sluggish, neglected enterprise into a fairly thriving one. It was a means of livelihood, too, and, more than that, a source of personal satisfaction for Robert that he succeeded with crops and stock, about which he had once known nothing.

All this continued when he was widowed, when the house and land became entirely his. There were no changes on the farm, but in the house—to which Mrs. O'Daly now came for three hours every weekday morning—Connie and her father, while slowly coming to terms with the loss they had suffered, shared the awareness of a ghost that fleetingly demanded no more than to be remembered. Life continuing could not fold away what had happened, but it offered something, blurring the drama of death's immediacy. And then, when almost two years had passed since the funeral, Robert asked Teresa to marry him.

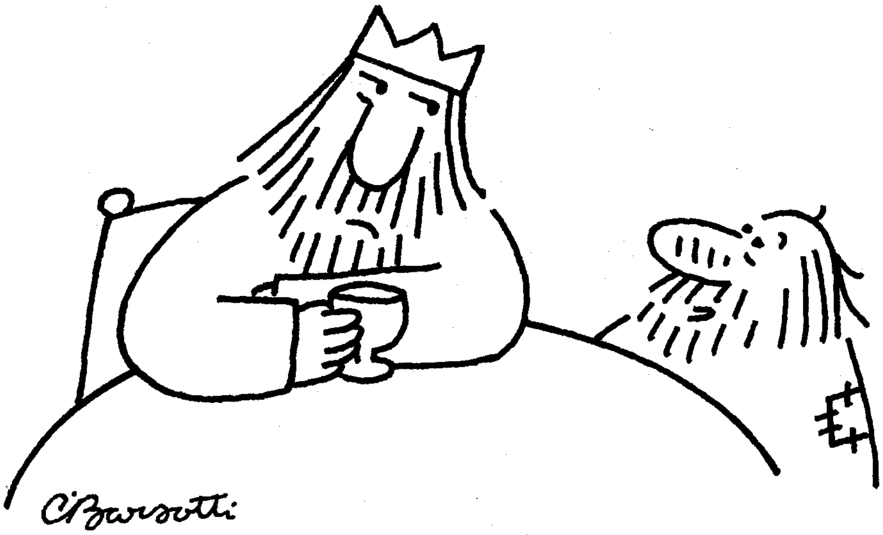
It was a natural thing. Having known one another through the friendship of their daughters, they had come to know one another better in the new circumstances, Teresa continuing to drive Melissa to the farm, along with her much younger brother, when he was made welcome there by Connie but was still too young to cycle. And Robert, doing his bit as often as he could, drove the two back to the bungalow at Fara Bridge, where their father in his day had attempted to get a pottery going.

The day he asked Teresa to marry him, Robert had looked up from the cabbages he was weeding and seen her coming toward him, along the verge of the field. She brought him tea in a can, which she often did when she stayed all afternoon to save him the journey later to Fara Bridge. A year after the death she had begun to fall in love with him.

"I never knew," he said in the cabbage field when Teresa's response to his proposal was to tell him that. "I thought you'd turn me down."



*"I'm sorry. The beef Wellington has to be ordered twenty-four hours in advance."*



*"Need a crony?"*

She took the can of tea from his hand and lifted it to her lips, the first intimacy between them, before their first embrace, before they spoke of love. "Oh, Robert, not in a million years would I turn you down," she whispered.

There were difficulties, but they didn't matter as they would have once. In an Ireland they could both remember it would have been commented upon that she, born into a religious faith that was not Robert's, had attended a funeral service in his alien church. It would have been declared that marriage would not do; that the divorce which had brought Teresa's to an end could not be recognized. Questions would have been asked about children who might be born to them: to which belief were they promised, in which safe haven might they know only their own kind? Such difficulties still trailed, like husks caught in old cobwebs, but there were fewer interfering strictures now in how children were brought up, and havens were less often sought. Melissa, a year older than Connie, had received her early schooling from the nuns in Clonmel and had gone on to an undenominational boarding school in Dublin. Her brother still attended the national school at Fara Bridge. Connie went to Miss Mortimer, whose tiny academy for Protestant children—her mother's choice because it was convenient—was conducted in an upstairs room at the rectory, ten minutes away along the river path. But, in the end, all three would be together at Melissa's boarding school, coeducational and of the present.

"How lovely all that is!" Teresa murmured.

There was a party at which the engagement was announced—wine in the afternoon, and Mrs. O'Daly's egg sandwiches again, and Teresa's sponge cakes and her brandy snaps and meringues. The sun came out after what had been a showery morning, allowing the celebration to take place in the garden. Overgrown and wild in places, the garden's neglect went back to the time of the death, although sometimes when she'd come to keep an eye on the children Teresa had done her best with the geranium beds, which had particularly been the task of Connie's mother.

She would do better now, Teresa promised herself, looking about among the guests as she had among the mourners, again half expecting to see the man who had left her, wanting him to be there, wanting him to know that she was loved again, that she had survived the indignity he had so casually subjected her to, that she was happy. But he wasn't there, as naturally he wouldn't be. All that was over, and the cousins from Mitchelstown with whom she had conversed on the afternoon of the funeral naturally weren't there, either.

Robert was happy, too—because Teresa was and because, all around him at the party, there were no signs of disapproval, only smiles of approbation.

Because the wedding was not to take place until later in the summer, after Melissa's return for the holidays, Connie and her father continued for a while to be alone together, managing, as he had said they would. Robert bought half a dozen Charolais calves, a breed he had never had on the farm before. He liked, every year, doing something new; and he liked the calves. Otherwise, his buying and selling were a pattern, his tasks a repetition. He repaired the fences, tightening the barbed wire where that was possible, renewing it when it wasn't. He looked out for the many ailments that beset sheep. He lifted the first potatoes and noted every day the ripening of his barley.

Teresa dragged clumps of Scotch grass and treacherous little nettles out of the sanguineum and the sylvaticum, taking a trowel to the docks. She cut down the Johnson's Blue, wary of letting it spread too wildly, but wouldn't have known to leave the Kashmir Purple a little longer, or that *pratense's* sturdy roots were a job to divide. A notebook left behind instructed her in all that.

Miss Mortimer closed her small school for the summer and Connie was at home all day then. Sometimes Melissa's brother was there, a small thin child called Nat, a name that according to Melissa couldn't be more suitable, since he so closely resembled an insect.

"You want to come with us?" Teresa invited Connie when Melissa's term had ended and she was setting off to meet her at the railway station in Clonmel. Connie hesitated, then said she didn't.

That surprised Teresa. She had driven over specially from Fara Bridge, as she always did when Melissa came back for the holidays. It surprised her, but afterward she realized she'd somehow sensed before she spoke that Connie was going to say no. She was puzzled but didn't let it show.

"Come back here, shall we?" she suggested, since this, too, was what always happened on Melissa's first evening home.

"If that's what you'd like," Connie said.

The train was twenty minutes late

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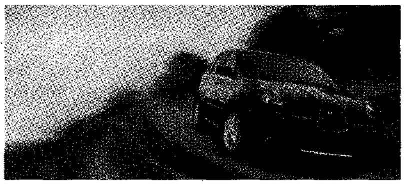
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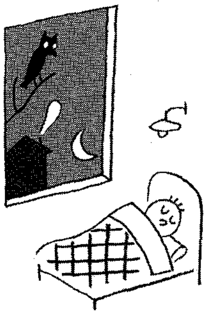
and when Teresa returned to the farm with Melissa and Nat, Connie wasn't in the house, and when her father came in later she wasn't with him, either, as she sometimes was. "Connie!" they all called in the yard, her father going into some of the sheds. Melissa and her brother went to the end of the avenue and a little way along the road in both directions. "Connie!" they called out in the garden, although they could see she wasn't there. "Connie!" they called, going from room to room in the house. Her father was worried. He didn't say he was but Melissa could tell. So could Teresa.

"She can't be far," she said. "Her bicycle's here."



She drove Melissa to Fara Bridge to unpack her things, and Nat went with them. She telephoned the farm then. There wasn't any answer and she guessed that Robert was still looking for his child.

The telephone was ringing again when Connie came back. She came downstairs; she'd been on the roof, she said. You went up through the trapdoor at the top of the attic stairs. You could lie down on the warm lead and read a book. Her father shook his head, saying it wasn't safe to climb about on the roof. He made her promise not to again. "What's the matter, Connie?" he asked her when he went to say good night. Connie said nothing was. Propped up in front of her was the book she'd been reading on the roof, "The Citadel," by A. J. Cronin.

"Surely you don't understand that, Connie?" her father said, and she said she wouldn't want to read a book she didn't understand.

Connie watched the furniture being unloaded. The men lifted it from the yellow removal van, each piece familiar to her from days spent in the bungalow at Fara Bridge. Space had been made, some of the existing furniture moved out, to be stored in one of the outhouses.

Melissa wasn't there. She was helping her mother to rearrange in the half-empty rooms at Fara Bridge the furniture that remained, which would have to be sold when the bungalow was because there wasn't room for it at the farm. There had been a notice up all summer announcing the sale of the bungalow, but no one had made an offer yet. "Every penny'll go into the farm," Connie had heard Teresa saying.

Nat, whom Teresa had driven over earlier, watched with Connie in the hall. He was silent this morning, as he often was, his thin arms wrapped tightly around his body in a way that suggested he suffered from the cold, although the day was warm. Now and again he glanced at Connie, as if expecting her to say something about what was happening, but she didn't.

All morning it took. Mrs. O'Daly brought the men tea and later, when they finished, Connie's father gave them a drink in the kitchen: small glasses of whiskey, except for the man who was the driver, who was given what remained in the bottle to take away with him.

"That's a lovely piece of delft," Mrs. O'Daly commented in the hall, referring to a blue-and-white soup tureen that the men had placed on the shelf of the hall stand. Having finished her morning's work, she had gone from room to room, inspecting the furniture that had come, and the glass and china in the hall. "Isn't that really lovely!" she exclaimed again about the soup tureen.

It was cracked, Connie saw, a long crack in the lid. It used to be on the sideboard of the dining room in the bungalow. She'd never much noticed it then, but in the hall it seemed obtrusive.

Melissa was pretty—tall and slender, with long fair hair and greenish eyes. She liked jokes, and was clever although she didn't want to be and often pretended she wasn't.

"Time to measure the maggot," she said later that same day. Her contention was that her brother had ceased to grow and would grow no more. She and Connie regularly made him stand against the doorjamb of Connie's bedroom in the hope of finding an increase in his modest stature.

But Connie shook her head when this was again suggested. She was reading "London Belongs to Me" and went on doing so. Nat, on his way upstairs already, for he enjoyed this ceremonial attention, looked disappointed.

"Poor little maggot," Melissa said. "Poor little maggot, Connie. You've gone and upset it."

"You shouldn't call your brother a maggot."

"Hey!" Outraged, Melissa stared disbelievingly at Connie's calm features. "Hey, come on!"

Connie turned down the corner of a page and began to walk away.

"It's only a blooming word," Melissa ran after her to protest. "He doesn't mind."

"This isn't your house," Connie said.

The day Connie's mother came back from the hospice Miss Mortimer had pinned up pictures of flowers. Miss Mortimer painted her pictures herself; before the flowers there'd been clowns. "Foxglove," Connie had said when Miss Mortimer asked.

Going home on the river path, Connie had been thinking of that: of the four new pictures on the schoolroom wall, of Miss Mortimer saying that soon there wouldn't be a cowslip left anywhere. The schoolroom stayed on in her mind nearly always when she was going home, the writing on the blackboard, the carpet, the boards showing all around it, the table they sat at, Miss Mortimer, too. The rectory itself stayed in the two flights of stairs, the white hall door, three steps, the gravel.

Her father didn't wave when she saw him coming toward her. It was drizzling and she thought that was maybe why he was coming to meet her. But often in winter it rained and he didn't; it was her mother who used to. "Hullo, Connie," he said, and she knew then that her mother had come back from the hospice, as she had said she would.

He took her hand, not telling her, because she knew. She didn't cry. She wanted to ask, in case it was different from what she guessed, but she didn't because she didn't want to hear if it was. "It's all right," her father said. He went with her to the room that had become her mother's, overlooking the garden. She touched her mother's hand and he lifted her up so that she could kiss her cheek, as often he'd done before. Mr. Crozier, the rector, was standing by the windows in the drawing room when they went downstairs again. She hadn't known he was there. Then the O'Dalys came.

"You stay here with me," Mrs. O'Daly said in the kitchen. "I'll hear you your reading." But it wasn't reading on a Tuesday; another verse to learn instead, and six sentences to write. "You going to write them, then?" Mrs. O'Daly asked. "You going to think them up?"

She didn't want to. She learned the verse and said it to her father when he came to sit beside her, but the next day she didn't have to go to Miss Mortimer's. People came in the morning. She could hear their footsteps in the hall and on the stairs; she couldn't hear voices. It was in the afternoon that her mother died.

"That's not like Connie," Robert said.

"No, it isn't."

When Teresa had been told by her children what Connie had said to them she had guessed, with sudden, bitter intuition, that everything going well was over. And she had wondered where she and Robert had gone wrong. Robert was simply bewildered.

The wedding, to be conducted by Mr. Crozier as a purely family occasion, was less than three weeks off. No going away afterward, no honeymoon, because the time of year on the farm wasn't right for that.

"What else does Connie say?"

Teresa shook her head. She didn't know but suspected nothing else, and was right.

"We want to be married," Robert said. "Nothing's going to stop that now."

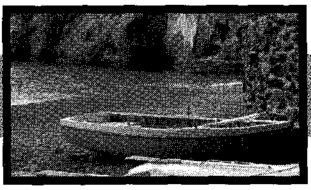
Teresa hesitated, but only for a moment.

"Nothing is," she said.

"Children manage to get on. Even when they're strangers to one another."

Teresa didn't say that being strangers might make things easier. She didn't say it because she didn't know why that should be. But Melissa, who never wept, wept often now, affected as a stranger would not have been.

The books Connie pretended to read were in the dining-room bookcases, on either side of the fireplace. They'd been her mother's books, picked up at country-house auctions, some thrown away when the shelves became full, all of them old, belonging to another time. "'The Man with Red Hair,'" her mother



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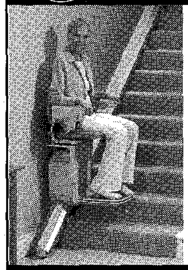

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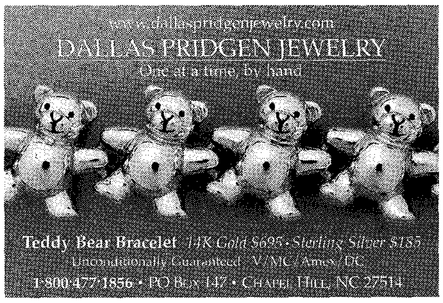

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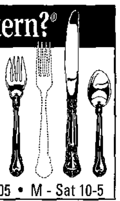

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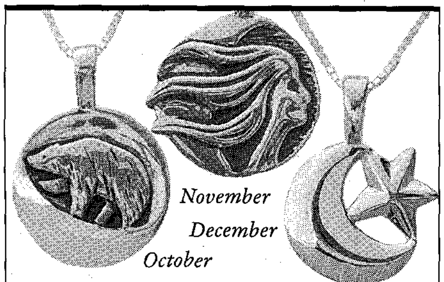

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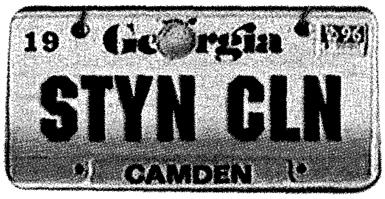

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said. "You'll love that." And "Dr. Bradley Remembers," and "Random Harvest." Only "Jamaica Inn" retained its paper jacket, yellow, without a picture. "And 'The Stars Look Down,' " her mother had said. "You'll love 'The Stars Look Down.' "

Connie took it to the roof, to the lead-covered gully she had found, wide enough to lie on between two slopes of slates. Every time she went there she wished she didn't have to disobey her father and always took care not to spend too long there in case she was discovered. Sometimes she stood up, protected from sight by the bulk of a chimney and, far away, saw her father in the fields or Teresa among the geraniums. Sometimes Melissa and Nat were on the avenue, Nat on the carrier of Melissa's bicycle, his small legs spread wide so that they wouldn't catch in the spokes.

Teresa felt she had never loved Robert more; and felt that she was loved, herself, more steadfastly even than before—as if, she thought, the trouble brought such closeness. Or was there panic? she wondered in other moments; was it in panic that the depths of trust were tapped? Was it in panic that the widowed and the rejected protected what they'd been unable to protect before? She did not know the answers to her questions. It only seemed all wrong that a child's obduracy should mock what was so fairly due.

"Connie."

Robert found her in the outhouse where the furniture was. She had folded aside a dust sheet and was sitting in an armchair of which the springs had gone, which should have been thrown out years ago.

"Connie," he interrupted her, for she had not heard him.

Her book was "Folly Bridge."

She marked her place with a finger. She smiled at him. No one considered that recently she'd turned sulky; there was no sign of that. Even when she'd told Melissa and Nat that the house was not theirs, she had apparently simply said it.

"You're troubled because Teresa and I are to be married, Connie."

"I'm all right."

"You didn't seem to mind before."

The armchair had a high back with wings, its faded red velvet badly worn in places, an embroidery of flowers stitched where an antimacassar might be.

"It's very good," Connie said, speaking about the book she held.

"Yes."

"Will you read it?"

"If you would like me to."

Connie nodded. And they could talk about it, she said. If he read it they could talk about it.

"Yes, we could. You've always liked Teresa, Connie. You've always liked Melissa and Nat. It isn't easy for us to understand."

"Couldn't it stay here, the furniture you don't want? Couldn't we keep it here?"

"Out here it's a bit damp for furniture."

"Couldn't we put it back, then?"

"Is that what's worrying you, Connie? The furniture?"

"When the books are thrown away I'll know what every single one of them was about."

"But, for heaven's sake, the books won't be thrown away!"

"I think they will be, really."

Robert went away. He didn't look for Teresa to tell her about the conversation. Every year at this time he erected a corral where his ewes paddled through a trough of disinfectant. They crowded it now, while he remembered his half-hearted protestations and Connie's unsatisfactory responses. "Oh, come on, come on! Get on with it!" Impatient with his sheep, as he had not been with his daughter, he wondered if Connie hated him. He had felt she did, although nothing like it had showed, or had echoed in her voice.

From the roof she saw a car she'd never seen before, and guessed why it had come. In one of the drawers of the rickety Welsh dresser she'd found a shopping list and thought she remembered it being lost. "Ironing starch. Baking powder," she'd read.

The car that had come was parked in the yard when she came down from the roof. A man was standing beside it. He referred to the furniture that was to be sold, as Connie had thought he might.

"Anyone around?" he asked her.

He was a big red-faced man in shirt-sleeves. He'd thought he'd never find the house, he said. He asked her if he was expected, if this was the right place, and she wanted to say it wasn't, but Teresa came out of the house then.

"Go and get your father," she said, and Connie nodded and went to where she'd seen him from the roof.

"Don't sell the furniture," she begged, instead of saying the man had come.

One night, when the wedding was five days away, Teresa drove over to the farm. About to go to bed, she knew she wouldn't be able to sleep, and wrote a note for Melissa, saying where she was going. It was after half past one and if there hadn't been a sign of life at the farm she would have driven away again. But the lights were on in the big drawing room and Robert heard the car. He'd been drinking, he confessed as he let Teresa in.

"I don't know how to make sense to her," he said when they'd embraced. Without asking, he poured her some whiskey. "I don't know what to do, Teresa."

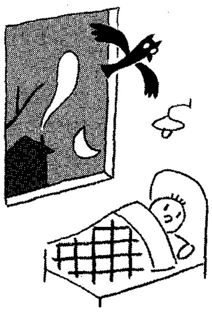
"I know you don't."

"When she came to stand beside me while I was milking this afternoon, when she didn't say anything but I could hear her pleading, I thought she was possessed. But later on we talked as if none of all this was happening. She laid the table. We ate the trout I'd fried. We washed the plates up. Dear Teresa, I can't destroy the childhood that is left to her."

"I think you're perhaps a little drunk."

"Yes."

He did not insist that there must be a way; and, knowing what frightened him, Teresa knew there wasn't. She was frightened herself while she was with him now, while wordlessly they shared the horrors of his alarm. Was some act, too terrible for a child, waiting in the desolation of despair to become a child's? They did not speak of what imagination made of it, how it might be, nurtured in anger's pain, in desperation and betrayal, the ways it might become unbearable.



They walked along on the avenue, close to one another in the refreshing air. The sky was lightening, dawn an hour away. The shadows of danger went with them, too treacherous to take chances with.

"Our love still matters," Teresa whispered. "It always will."

A calf had been born and safely delivered. It had exhausted her father, Connie could tell. And rain that had begun a week ago had hardly ceased, washing his winter seeding into a mire.

"Oh, it'll be all right," he said.

He knew what she was thinking, and he watched her being careful with plates that were warming in the oven, careful with the coffee she made, letting it sit a moment. Coffee at suppertime was what he'd always liked. She heated milk and poured it from the saucepan.

The bread was sawn, slices waiting on the board, butter beside them. There were tomatoes, the first of the Blenheims, the last of the tayberries. Pork steak browned on the pan.

It was not all bleakness: Robert was aware of that. In moments like the moments that were passing now, and often too at other times, he discerned in what had been his daughter's obduracy a spirit, still there, that was not malicious. In the kitchen that was so familiar to both of them, and outside in the raw cold of autumn when she came to him in the fields, she was as events had made her, the recipient of a duty she could not repudiate. It had seemed to her that an artificial household would demand that she should, and perhaps it might have.

Robert had come to understand that; Teresa confessed that nothing was as tidy as she'd imagined. There were no rights that cancelled other rights, less comfort than she'd thought for the rejected and the widowed, and no fairness, either. They had been hasty, she dared to say, although two years might seem a long enough hiatus. They had been clumsy and had not known it. They had been careless, yet were not careless people. They were a little to blame, but only that.

And Robert knew that time in passing would settle how the summer had been left. Time would gather up the ends, and see to it that his daughter's honoring of a memory was love that mattered also, and even mattered more. ♦

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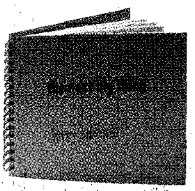

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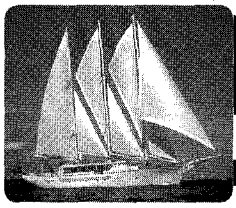

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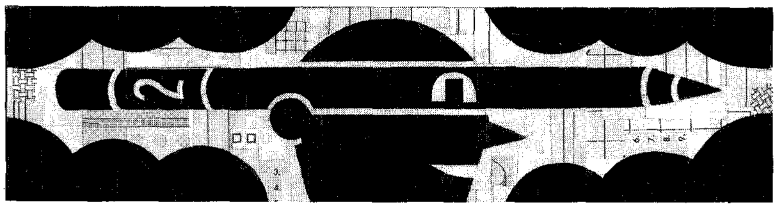


### BOOKS

# THE SPANISH PRISONER

*When Hemingway and Dos Passos went to war.*

BY GEORGE PACKER

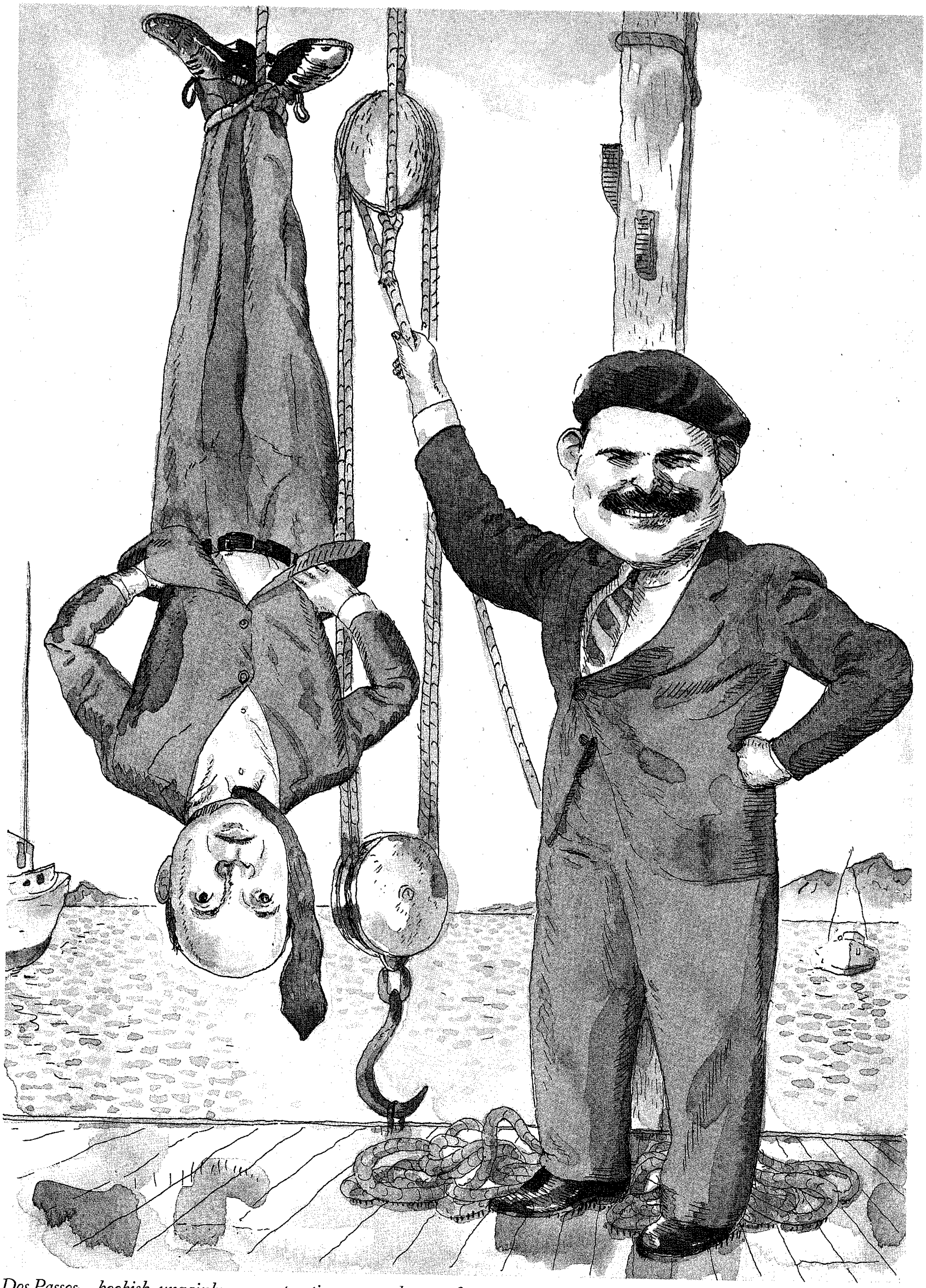
There was a moment, in April of 1937, when the Lost Generation of nineteen-twenties Paris reunited in Madrid. The occasion was the Spanish Civil War, already in its ninth month, but the regular shelling of the Hotel Florida and other privations of the Fascist siege didn't prevent Ernest Hemingway, John Dos Passos, Josephine Herbst, and Hemingway's latest distraction from the thought of suicide, Martha Gellhorn, from living well. Though the Hotel Florida wasn't the Café des Amateurs, Hemingway managed to procure, thanks in part to impeccable connections with the Spanish government and the Russian general staff, the best food and brandy in the city. Every morning, the other guests woke up to the smell of eggs, bacon, and coffee being prepared by a Hemingway flunky in Room 108, courtesy of the Communist International. The moveable feast had crashed the Red decade.

Hemingway was an unlikely recruit to the Spanish cause. He had long since made his separate peace with the war of his youth and focussed his talent on the terse eloquence of the nobly wounded, the faithfully adrift, the stoically defeated; the Hemingway antihero, withdrawn from all causes, became a type of such popular influence that a whole crop of movies, novels, and actual lives grew laconic in imitation. But, in the nineteen-thirties, the literary infatuation with Communism returned to American prose the kind of lofty, romantic language that Hemingway had condemned at the end of "A Farewell to Arms": "There were many words that you could not stand to hear and finally only the names of places had dignity. Certain numbers were the same way and certain dates and these with the names of places were all you could say and have them mean anything. Abstract words such as glory, honor, courage, or hallow were obscene beside the concrete names of villages, the numbers of roads, the names of rivers, the numbers of regiments and the dates." For Hemingway, the nineteen-thirties had nothing to do with coal strikes and the Scottsboro trial, and everything to do with bullfighting, marlin fishing, big-game hunting, and staving off the decline of his literary powers. By 1936, a decade past being very poor and very happy, he had become his own chief imitator—an international celebrity without a published novel in seven years and with a bad one ("To Have and Have Not") in manuscript. He had grown bored with his second marriage, to the wealthy, adoring, and shallow Pauline—ruthlessly portrayed in one of his last great stories, "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," as the desperately cheerful wife of a writer dying of gangrene and soul rot on an East African game reserve. With an animal instinct of impending doom, Hemingway, at the age of thirty-seven, sought out two familiar escape routes: violence and sex.

In February of 1936, Spanish voters elected by a narrow plurality a center-left coalition government of Anarchists, Socialists, Communists, and Republicans. It was the third democratic election in five years in a country that had not yet shed its feudal and clerical past. Some factions in the elected government had revolutionary goals, with those on the far left calling for "democracy of a new type," meaning a prelude to the dictatorship of the proletariat; after five months of chaos, two of the Spanish institutions that had long exercised repressive power under the old monarchy—the military and the Church—were ready to overthrow the Republic. The civil war began on July 17th, when General Francisco Franco launched a rebellion from Spanish Morocco that quickly cut Spain in half. The Western democracies imposed an arms embargo on both sides, but Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy began giving troops and matériel to Franco's rebels almost immediately, even as the Soviet Union advised and armed the Republic.

In late September, Hemingway wrote his editor at Scribners, Maxwell Perkins, "I hate to have missed the Spanish thing worse than anything in the world but have to have this book finished first." The civil war, which most people assumed would last a few months, accommodated Hemingway's writing schedule; it would go on for another two and a half years. He finished a draft of "To Have and Have Not" and immediately contracted to write a series of newspaper dispatches from the Madrid front. In short order, he also fell in love with Gellhorn, a beautiful and well-connected younger journalist who sailed into his marooned life on Key West just before she was scheduled to depart for Spain herself, on assignment for *Collier's*. In Madrid, he offered literary advice and patronage; she educated him in Popular Front propaganda while accommodating him sexually to the extent, according to one biographer, of undergoing a widening procedure known as vaginoplasty.

John Dos Passos was travelling to Spain as well. He was Hemingway's friend from their days in Paris, and he had met his wife through him. Hemingway, near the end of his life, portrayed Dos Passos in the nasty last pages of "A Moveable Feast" as a treacherous little "pilot fish" who had led Pauline and her rich friends into Hemingway's youthful domestic bliss in the twenties and lured him into breaking up his first marriage. But Hemingway's friendship with Dos Passos was already strained by the pub-



*Dos Passos—bookish, ungainly, sunny, trusting—was the sort of man who brought out Hemingway's sadistic appetites.*

lication, in 1936, of "The Big Money," the third novel of Dos Passos's "U.S.A." trilogy, to general acclaim and a *Time* cover story the week that fighting began in Spain. For a brief moment, Dos Passos was as big as the big man of American letters. It's hard now to remember that, several generations ago, the trio of great novelists born around the turn of the century—Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Faulkner—was a quartet, with the fourth chair occupied by Dos Passos. "U.S.A.," which tells an alternative, submerged history of the first three decades of the American century, has become one of the great neglected achievements of literary modernism, with its nervy, jarring formal juxtapositions—newspaper headlines, popular songs, autobiographical fragments, short biographies of the famous—punctuating deceptively flat sagas of ordinary fictional types on the margins of great events, driven by the blind force of history across blighted human landscapes.

## HOW TO WAIT

If there were a word that meant
thought, mind, spirit
and wish, desire,
appetite.

And memory,
and recall. And finally also
will, purpose, intention,

we might have it down:
The impatient child
filled without being filled,
filled despite

the longing, being just
sated enough. Pears poached long enough,
making their long, light syrup.

And if we did have the word?
Not just one thing alone,
and not just longing.

—*Elizabeth Macklin*

Dos Passos was, to the core, a political writer, whose radical vision was crystallized the night of Sacco and Vanzetti's electrocution, in 1927. "America our nation has been beaten by strangers who have turned our language inside out who have taken the clean words our fathers spoke and made them slimy and foul . . . all right we are two nations," he declaimed in a prose poem about the incident near the end of "The Big Money." Though Dos Passos's characters had some resemblance to the downtrodden figures of the proletarian novel of the thirties, his technical brio belonged to the defiant, avant-garde twenties, when radicalism had more to do with art than with politics. Dos Passos never managed or even tried to depict a fully realized inner life, and his experimentalism, his technique of narrating characters externally in the vernacular of their own voices, prevented him from achieving the tragic effects of Dreiser's clumsier, more earthbound realism, though the picture of American dreaming is just as dark. "You yourself seem to enjoy life more than most people and are by way of being a brilliant talker; but you tend to make your characters talk clichés, and they always get a bad egg for breakfast," Edmund Wilson—who was also made by the twenties but took a keen interest in the revolutionary movements of the thirties—observed in a letter to him. "I sometimes think you consider this a duty of some kind." A writer whose single greatest burst of prose describes the burial of the Unknown Soldier after the First World War, culminating in the words "Woodrow Wilson brought a bouquet of poppies," will always have a tenuous hold on popularity.

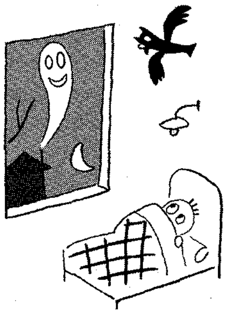
Dos Passos went to Spain in order to work on a documentary about the war, "The Spanish Earth," to be shot by a brilliant young Dutch filmmaker named Joris Ivens, under the auspices of a group of New York writers led by Archibald MacLeish. The project's purpose was to galvanize American support for the beleaguered Spanish government and to encourage President Roosevelt to lift the arms embargo. Dos Passos, already growing disenchanted with the American left, was encumbered with all the luggage of his embattled political ideals. There was a lot he didn't know about what he had signed on for: Ivens was a hireling of the Comintern; the whole undertaking was a piece of propaganda controlled by Moscow; and Dos Passos himself, always an independent radical, was officially out of favor with the Communist Party, having been denounced at the 1934 Soviet Writers Congress, where the Party line on art turned from modernism to socialist realism. Moscow meant to use Dos Passos to lure the biggest fish of all to lend his name to the film. Hemingway, indifferent to left-wing politics until he met Martha Gellhorn, was happy to oblige.

What happened between Hemingway and Dos Passos in Spain is the subject of Stephen Koch's new book, "The Breaking Point: Hemingway, Dos Passos, and the Murder of José Robles" (Counterpoint; $24.95). Koch's story illustrates, among other things, the danger of writers plunging into politics and war, and it offers an unlovely portrait of the engagé artist as useful idiot. Its small drama leads directly to all the big questions about the nature of the Spanish Civil War which have recently generated controversy among historians. The Spaniard of Koch's subtitle was Dos Passos's close friend from youthful wanderings in Spain. José Robles was a left-wing aristocrat, a political exile and a professor at Johns Hopkins during the rule of the Spanish monarchy, who was vacationing in Spain at the time of Franco's rebellion. But Robles maintained enough independence of mind to raise an alarm among pro-Communist Spanish authorities and the Soviet intelligence agents who, by early 1937, were bringing the government increasingly under Stalin's control. Dos Passos was counting on Robles to serve as his main Spanish contact on the film; but by the time the two American novelists reached Madrid, separately, Robles had disappeared. It was Hemingway who learned first—from the Greenwich Village journalist Josephine Herbst, herself on a tour of the war zone very likely sponsored by the Comintern—that Robles had been arrested and shot as a Fascist spy. To this day, the manner and motive of Robles's death remain a mystery; he was almost certainly a victim of the Stalinist purges that began around the same time in Spain.

Dos Passos, concerned for his friend's wife and children, made the rounds of Spanish officials, only to encounter an unctuous series of bureaucratic lies and brushoffs—now that they had Hemingway, they didn't even need to be polite to Dos Passos. Still, Dos Passos's response to his friend's disappearance reflected his sense that progressive politics without human decency is a sham. Hemingway, in a thinly disguised magazine article about the episode published in a short-lived *Esquire* spinoff called *Ken*, described these scruples as "the good hearted naiveté of a typical American liberal attitude." Bookish, balding, tall and ungainly, sunny in temperament, too trusting of others' good will: Dos Passos was the sort of man who aroused Hemingway's sadistic appetite. "White as the under half of an unsold flounder at 11 o'clock in the morning just before the fish market shuts" was one of Hemingway's fictionalized descriptions of his old friend. Hemingway seems to have needed to destroy a friendship or a marriage every few years just to keep functioning. In Madrid he did both.

He and Gellhorn received Dos Passos coldly when he arrived empty-handed at their well-provisioned suite; they were embarrassed by all the questions he was asking around town. "If it's your professor bloke's disappearance, think nothing of it," Hemingway sneers, in Stephen Koch's retelling. "People disappear every day." This was war, and there was a way to behave during a war, and Dos Passos was failing the code. "Dos was not good in war, Hem claimed, because he was not a hunter," Koch writes, paraphrasing Herbst's own observations in her book "Spanish Journal." "He didn't know how to take care of himself in the wild. That's what made him show up with no food. Dos had no balls; Dos had no understanding of war." At one key moment in "The Breaking Point," Dos Passos tells Hemingway, "The question I keep putting to myself is what's the use of fighting a war for civil liberties, if you destroy civil liberties in the process?" Hemingway shoots back, "Civil liberties, *shit*. Are you *with* us or are you against us?"

Hemingway never embraced the ideological dogma of the Communists, though he admired their hardboiled stance, and he regarded the revolutionary fervor of the Anarchists as a joke. If chance had placed him in the Fascist sector, he would have been attracted to the steely nerve of Franco's lieutenants. The reasons for Hemingway's partisanship were entirely personal and literary. The imperative to hold the purity of his line through the maximum of exposure, which in 1931 made him an aficionado of bullfighting and in 1934 a crack shot in Kenya, in 1937 turned Hemingway into a willing tool of Stalin's secret police. It was a rough brand of radical chic that also created a new type: the war correspondent as habitué of a particularly exclusive night club, who knows how and how not to act under shelling, where to get the best whiskey, what tone to use when drinking with killers. He's drawn to violence and power for their own sake; war and the politics of war simply provide the stage for his own display of sang-froid. The influence of this type helped to mar the work of successive generations of war writers up to our own.



The falseness of Hemingway's period in Spain can be felt in the novel that he eventually got out of the civil war. "For Whom the Bell Tolls" was a wild success with the American left and with Hollywood (as was the film "The Spanish Earth," a masterly piece of cinematic propaganda narrated by Hemingway, who also toured with it around the country; Dos Passos was entirely cut out). Hemingway's hero Robert Jordan, an American volunteer in the International Brigade, carries himself through revolution and war with all the stylized, self-conscious poise of a lonely matador in the ring. The Spanish critic Arturo Barea, himself a target of the secret police, wrote after the novel's publication, in 1940, "I find myself awkwardly alone in the conviction that, as a novel about Spaniards and their war, it is unreal and, in the last analysis, deeply untruthful."

As for Dos Passos, Spain seems to have killed something in him. He had gone there to see what he had given up on seeing in America—workers and peasants struggling to create a more just society—not to drink *anis* with Russian commissars in range of enemy artillery. The betrayals he experienced in Spain, personal and political, were so devastating that he could not bring himself to write an account of what happened to his murdered friend José Robles and his former friend Ernest Hemingway. (Hemingway, meanwhile, was spreading the news back home, in person and in print, that Dos Passos was a coward and a traitor to *la causa*.) But, in 1938, when Dos Passos was still trying to sort out the meaning of Robles's death, he published a novel (lambasted by fellow-travelling critics such as Malcolm Cowley) about a disillusioned young radical who goes to fight in Spain and dies there. No one today has heard of "Adventures of a Young Man," while "For Whom the Bell Tolls" is still taught in high schools. Hemingway's romantic fable is in almost every way more compelling. But Dos Passos, in his dispirited and unblinking realism, was the one to convey what it meant to be alive in the nineteen-thirties.

Koch, who is also the author of "Double Lives," a study of the Comintern's exploitation of intellectuals in the thirties, as well as two novels, has structured his book as a series of vividly rendered scenes connected by intelligent commentary, with the extensive dialogue largely drawn from the many pieces and books—some fictional—that his main characters devoted to Spain. In the trade-off between the pleasurable and the verifiable, though, Koch has a bias toward the former, and not all of the dramatic specificity of "The Breaking Point" can be sustained by its sources. (The rude welcome given by Hemingway and Gellhorn to Dos Passos on his arrival at the Hotel Florida is drawn entirely from a scene in "Century's Ebb," a novel written by Dos Passos almost forty years later, at the end of his life.) Without these liberties, of course, the book would be far less readable. But some flourishes aren't necessary: when Koch tries to amplify a tale that requires none with his own one-sentence-paragraph interjections ("*Hadn't noticed him*?"), he puts his thumb on the scales. We already know where the author's sympathies lie.

What are we now to think about the Spanish Civil War? Though Koch focusses on the theme of friendship and betrayal, the larger historical question hovers over all the action of "The Breaking Point." Spain was where the twentieth century's great lie, the totalitarian lie, flowered. And yet for decades the Popular Front line that the war was a simple black-and-white struggle between democracy and fascism remained one of the century's most stubborn myths. In 1984, when I was in my early twenties, I saw a documentary, narrated by Studs Terkel, called "The Good Fight," a direct descendant of "The Spanish Earth"; and the heroic testimony of those aging survivors of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, sitting on neatly made cots in narrow furnished rooms, overwhelmed me. I knew that most of them were Communists, under Party discipline, and I knew (having read "Homage to Catalonia" earlier that year) that Moscow-backed agents had engineered the violent betrayal of the independent worker movement in Barcelona in May of 1937, just after Dos Passos left the country. Somehow none of this mattered in the face of a struggle in which neutrality seemed impossible. The whole point of Spain to several generations of left-wing intellectuals was the need for people ordinarily disposed toward equivocation to take sides. Auden, who contributed a statement to a pamphlet on Spain called "Authors Take Sides," expressed the reluctant longing in "Spain," the poem that he wrote just before the street fighting broke out in Barcelona, and later repudiated: "What's your proposal? To build the Just City? I will,/I agree. Or is it the suicide pact, the romantic/Death? Very well, I accept, for/I am your choice, your decision: yes, I am Spain."

Since the fall of the Soviet Union and the opening of state archives in Moscow, scholarship has considerably darkened the view of the Communist role in Republican Spain. Moscow's subversion of the Spanish government, especially after May, 1937, when the pro-Communist Juan Negrín became Prime Minister, turns out to have been more extensive than most of the Republic's defenders ever knew, and more Machiavellian. The historian Stanley G. Payne's "The Spanish Civil War, the Soviet Union, and Communism," published last year, portrays a Spanish government that was in no serious sense democratic: though elected by a small plurality, it was composed largely of revolutionary parties that showed no willingness to allow the right wing a political future in Spain, and it was extremely brutal in its treatment of clerics, landowners, and suspected Fascists. In other words, Payne suggests, the elected Spanish government was probably headed toward Soviet-style totalitarianism before Franco ever launched his rebellion. Nor, according to recent scholarship, was the Republic forced to turn to the dubious embrace of the Soviet Union only after the Western democracies imposed their embargo; Stalin was among the Spanish government's first arms suppliers of choice. Such discoveries have been enough to persuade some writers on Spain that the right side won.

In military and political terms, the civil war didn't resemble the coming world war; from the start, it was an internal struggle between revolutionary and counter-revolutionary forces. But many revisionists have replaced one set of simplifications with another. The failure of the democracies to defend the Spanish Republic convinced Hitler and Mussolini that Fascist takeovers elsewhere in Europe would go unchecked; Soviet interference was inevitable given the weakness of the Republic and the maneuverings of Germany and Italy. If it was acceptable for Winston Churchill, now the darling of the anti-appeasement lobby in Washington, to enter into an alliance with Stalin ("If Hitler invaded hell," Churchill explained, "I would make at least a favorable reference to the devil in the House of Commons"), it's difficult to see why the same calculation, when made by Spaniards in 1936 in circumstances at least as desperate as Britain's in 1941, should disqualify the entire struggle. When Heinrich Himmler visited Spain in 1940, the year after Franco's protracted victory, he was shocked by the brutality of the Falangist repression. Whether or not democracy was on one side, fascism was clearly on the other.

Intellectuals can hardly keep away from politics any more than other citizens, and probably less, especially in decades like the nineteen-thirties (or this one, for that matter). But, because they typically bring to it an unstable mix of abstraction and narcissism, their judgments tend to be absolute, when nothing in politics ever is. This is why a writer as devoted to the visible, concrete world as Hemingway could nonetheless stumble so badly during his time in Spain: he lacked a sense of politics. The writer forever in search of one true sentence ended up accepting a whole raft of lies. Dos Passos, for his part, lacked the inner toughness to recover from the blow his idealism was dealt by José Robles's murder and Hemingway's betrayal. Dos Passos, of course, never wrote another book that came anywhere near the brilliance of "U.S.A." At the same time, as if his literary flame required the fuel of radical politics to keep burning, after Spain he began a rightward drift, which by the 1964 election had become so extreme that Edmund Wilson wrote him, "I feel obliged to tell you that your article about the San Francisco convention sounded like a teenager squealing over the Beatles. What on earth has happened to you? How can you take Goldwater seriously?" (Even during his Goldwater phase, though, Dos Passos never repudiated his belief in the Spanish Republican cause.) When war, politics, and writers mix, the results are seldom inspiring.

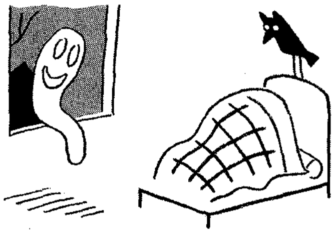
Toward the end of "The Breaking Point," Dos Passos, reeling from these revelations and on his way out of the country, walks into a Barcelona hotel lobby and is accosted by a lanky, battered-looking Englishman who is on leave after months at the front and has been waiting to meet him. "Things I've heard lead me to believe that you are one of the few who understand what's going on," George Orwell tells John Dos Passos. His appearance in the story amounts to a cameo, but, because he was better cut out for Spain and politics than either Hemingway or Dos Passos, Orwell kept his bearings, neither turning the war into a stage for his own psychodrama nor wilting under the pressure of ambiguous reality. Almost seventy years after its publication, his "Homage to Catalonia" holds up against all the recent revelations and controversies about the Spanish Civil War. Orwell was always able to sustain two ideas about it: one of betrayal, the other of hope. His encounter with reality in Spain was steady enough that these didn't have to cancel each other out. "What I saw in Spain did not make me cynical," he wrote to a friend just after returning to England, "but it does make me think that the future is pretty grim." Summing up the war several years after it ended, Orwell still hadn't followed Dos Passos to the right. "In essence it was a class war," he wrote. "That was the real issue; all else was froth on its surface."

Because we live in the age after the age of class war, when no idea has taken the place of socialism to carry the human aspiration for equality, the historiographical debate over the nature of the Spanish Civil War has a blind spot when it comes to the human heart of the matter. The files of the Soviet secret police have exploded forever the fiction of good versus evil in Spain. But in the early scenes of "Homage to Catalonia," and in the photographs of Robert Capa from Barcelona and Madrid, and in Arturo Barea's memoir, one keeps encountering a certain expression on the human face. Octavio Paz, who, though he fought in Spain, was not a writer given to illusion, described it years later in "The Labyrinth of Solitude": "In those faces—obtuse and obstinate, gross and brutal, like those the great Spanish painters, without the least touch of complacency and with an almost flesh-and-blood realism, have left us—there was something like a desperate hopefulness, something very concrete and at the same time universal. Since then I have never seen the same expression on any face. . . . The memory will never leave me. Anyone who has looked Hope in the face will never forget it. He will search for it everywhere he goes." ♦

# BRIEFLY NOTED

Mission to America, *by Walter Kirn (Doubleday; $23.95).* Kirn's satirical novel follows two young men who are dispatched from a cloistered religious community in rural Montana to recruit converts from present-day America. As they gorge on junk food and vapid women, administer a well-being quiz (sample question: "Are you ever aware of your own heartbeat?"), and become in-house counsel for a Colorado mogul, one can clearly discern the author attempting to skewer the consumerism and the spiritual emptiness of contemporary society. But the critique is vitiated by the fact that the community this society is being measured against is so patently silly (young men lose their virginity at a yearly event called "The Frolic"; women read messages from the dead by looking at tree bark), and that the main characters exist only to illustrate the various themes.

The Days of Abandonment, *by Elena Ferrante, translated from the Italian by Ann Goldstein (Europa Editions; $14.95).* In this deeply observed, excruciatingly blunt novel, Olga, a middle-aged wife and mother, is plunged into a breakdown after her husband leaves her for a younger woman. Her anguish is expressed through obscenity and violence, as she neglects her children and day-to-day responsibilities to obsess over what sexual acts her husband and his lover might be performing. Olga's rage and self-pity threaten to turn her into something of a monster; when she hears her daughter crying for her, she thinks, "But why should I hurry? I discovered with remorse that, if the child needed me, I felt no need of her." Still, Ferrante knows just when to let up, and the redemptive note struck by the ending is a welcome reprieve.



New York Burning, *by Jill Lepore (Knopf; $26.95).* On March 18, 1741, the first of ten suspicious fires broke out in New York City. In the months that followed, eighty-one slaves confessed to conspiring to "set Fire to the Town and kill the white People." The city was gripped by hysteria that, even at the time, drew comparisons with the Salem witch trials. Lepore's account is vivid and provocative; she evokes eighteenth-century New York in all its moral and physical messiness—the smell of the city is almost palpable—and shows how, at a time when one in five New Yorkers was a slave, the "Negro Plot" trials shaped the colonists' vision of liberty. In the end, thirteen slaves were burned at the stake, seventeen hanged (along with a white prostitute who gave birth to a black man's child), and hundreds imprisoned, until, Lepore writes, the dungeon under City Hall resembled "the hull of a slave ship." Lepore argues that some slaves were indeed plotting against masters, but in a way that had little to do with the authorities' wild surmises of Masonic rituals and disguised priests.

The Moral Consequences of Economic Growth, *by Benjamin M. Friedman (Knopf; $35).* Friedman, a Harvard economist well known for his criticism of Reagan-era fiscal policies, employs broad historical and geographical perspectives to argue that a nation's democratic institutions flourish best in times of stable economic growth. Americans, on the whole, are richer and freer than just about anyone else in the world, but the gap between rich and poor is higher today than it has been at almost any other time since the Great Depression, and most Americans don't feel better off than they did five or six years ago. Drawing comparisons with emerging economies, and citing authorities as diverse as Adam Smith and Jonathan Edwards, Friedman argues for decisive steps to limit budget deficits and for investment in programs that support broad-based growth. He warns that "any nation, even one with incomes as high as America's, will find the basic character of its society at risk if it allows its citizens' living standards to stagnate."

## THE SKY LINE

# THE SCULPTOR

*Santiago Calatrava redefines the apartment tower.*

### BY PAUL GOLDBERGER

Eero Saarinen's swooping concrete T.W.A. terminal, at Kennedy Airport, has often been compared to a bird with outstretched wings. When Saarinen, who died in 1961, was asked if that was what he meant his building to look like, he responded that people could say whatever they wanted, but he had far more serious things on his mind than birds. The Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava, who has been greatly influenced by Saarinen's forms, takes the opposite tack—he embraces analogies between his buildings and living creatures. If Calatrava had designed the T.W.A. terminal, he would have named it the Soaring Eagle.

And so Calatrava's first high-rise apartment tower, in Malmö, Sweden, has been christened the Turning Torso. The title is a reference to a white marble sculpture, by Calatrava, of a human form in motion; in 1999, the five-foot-high work so captivated the building's developer that he hired Calatrava to stretch the piece into a skyscraper—even though the architect had not yet designed one. The fifty-four-story structure, which has views of Copenhagen from across the Øresund Strait, opens in November. There are a hundred and forty-seven apartments—each of which has slanting windows, curving walls, and oddly shaped rooms—and all of them have been rented.

Calatrava is the most crowd-pleasing architect since Frank Gehry. His work, too, is dazzling and emotionally engaging. And, just as Gehry exploited the trend of museum building in the nineteen-nineties, Calatrava has aligned himself with the latest architectural fashion: bespoke luxury-apartment towers. In 2003, he designed a striking apartment complex for lower Manhattan consisting of twelve four-story cubes stacked in a tall, open frame. And this spring a Chicago developer, Christopher T. Carley, announced that Calatrava will design a corkscrew-shaped, hundred-and-fifteen-story tower, along Lake Michigan, which will contain condominiums and a hotel; the building, when completed, will be the tallest in the United States.

At the press conference for the Chicago building, Calatrava, who speaks English with a heavy accent, began with an awkward description of the design. He called the shape of his building "helicoidal," which is as arcane a term for "spiral" as there is. He then turned to his secret weapon: an easel-size pad. He drew a human body, torqued like a tennis player in mid-swing. He then sketched a tree trunk. Finally, he drew a lovely spiral, and explained that what he had in mind was a tall tower that rose organically, in a way that echoed natural forms.

Calatrava's slick salesmanship helps to explain his success with real-estate developers, especially considering how little commercial work he has built. For years, he was best known for a series of magnificent bridges, including one in Seville, Spain, that resembles a giant harp. A Calatrava form tends to appear both delicate and powerful, like a futuristic version of a Gothic cathedral. It is almost invariably white, which emphasizes its lightness and modernity. His first American project, an expansion of the Milwaukee Art Museum, completed in 2001, has a lacy, curving façade—a spectacular homage to Saarinen.

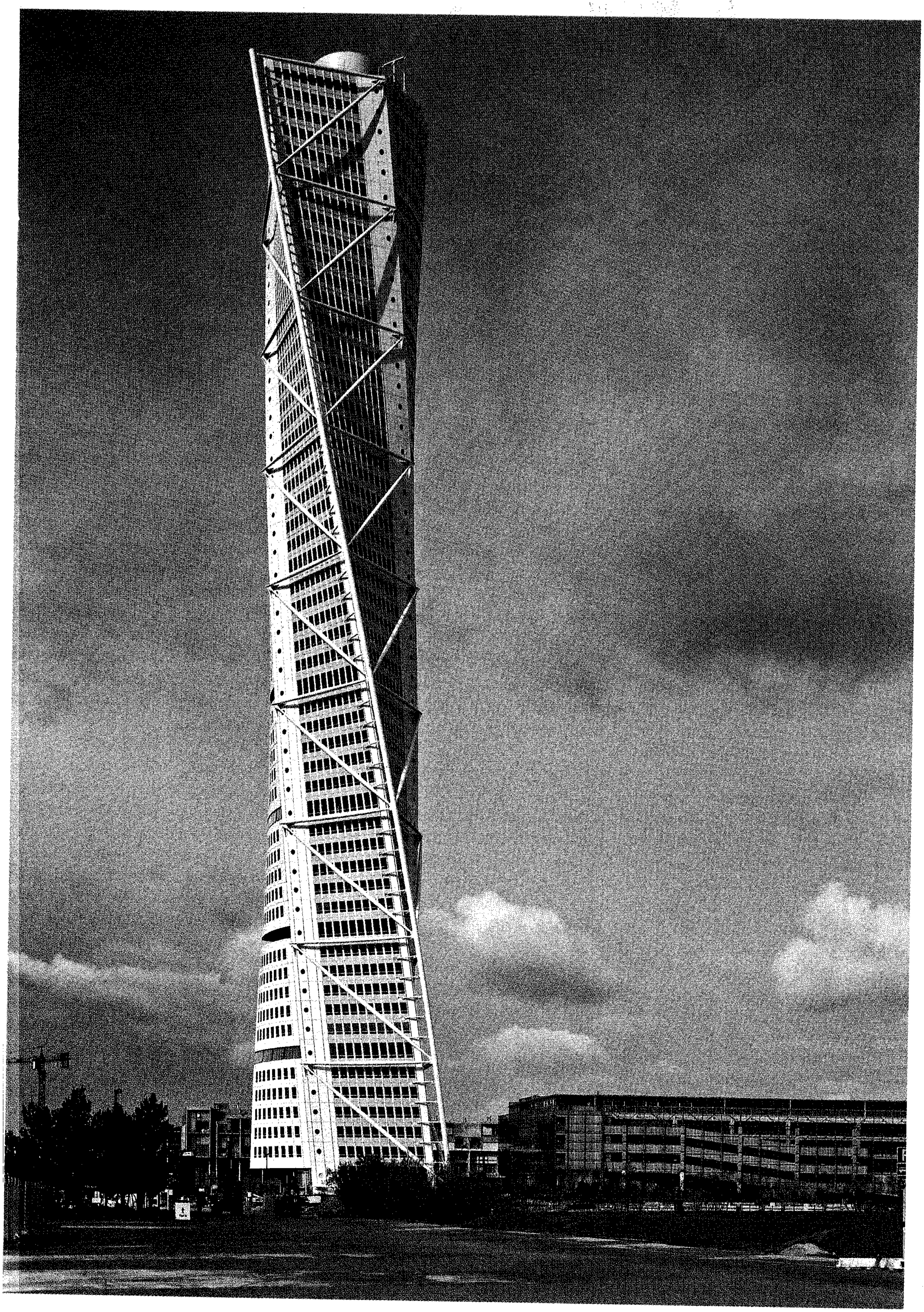
The museum addition, for all its allure, is not particularly practical: it's basically a soaring entry hall, with little exhibit space. Still, when Christopher Carley went to see it shortly after it opened, he was smitten. "I said, 'My God, even the parking garage is beautiful,' " Carley told me. "I stumbled out in total awe. I thought, Chicago ought to have this, I have to get Calatrava down here." Carley attended a lecture that Calatrava gave at the Art Institute of Chicago, and introduced himself afterward. Calatrava took out his pad, sketched a dove, and handed it to Carley as a gift. A few months later, Carley flew to Zurich, where Calatrava has his headquarters, to plead with the architect to design an apartment building for him. Calatrava rejected the sites that Carley proposed until the developer came up with some prominent waterfront land, opposite Navy Pier. Architects have long fantasized about being approached with such deference by real-estate developers; usually, they are treated like hired hands and ordered to cut the frills. Calatrava is one of the few architects living the dream.

Calatrava has had similar good luck in Sweden. The Turning Torso's developer, H.S.B., generally builds co-ops aimed at middle-class tenants. But Johnny Örbäck, the company's former managing director, let Calatrava create the kind of opulent tower that, until now, had been unheard-of in Sweden, a country generally suspicious of concierges and wine cellars. And Calatrava was offered a prominent open site along Malmö's developing waterfront, assuring that his building will stand out. As you drive from Denmark on the Øresund Bridge, one building fully pierces the horizon: the Turning Torso.

Calatrava designs are ordered up as icons, and the architect proudly delivers. The Malmö tower has no relationship with the buildings around it. Whereas Gehry takes care to play his whorled-metal shapes off the older architecture nearby, Calatrava attempts to transcend his surroundings. His designs are abstractions, and strangely otherworldly. (As a Calatrava retrospective at the Metropolitan Museum of Art reveals, his building models are virtually indistinguishable from his sculptures.) A Calatrava building has none of the hard edges of many modern structures, but it isn't lush, either. You feel as if you were looking at a mystical vision—something that might evaporate in the mist. Indeed, his buildings often look best from afar, when they appear most apparitional. Calatrava buildings don't sit on the ground; they dance above it.

Dancing is not what skyscrapers are

*Calatrava's Turning Torso, in Malmö, Sweden, is a strangely propulsive skyscraper. Photograph by Robert Polidori.*



expected to do, and Calatrava's Turning Torso takes some getting used to. Unlike most skyscrapers, which are designed to look immobile no matter how much they may sway in the wind, this tower looks strangely kinetic—as if it were poised to move horizontally. Usually, the thrust of skyscrapers is vertical: capped with fancy tops, they resemble castles or rocket ships. Most architects who design skyscrapers focus on two aesthetic problems: how to meet the ground, and how to meet the sky—the bottom and the top, in other words. Calatrava is interested solely in the middle. For him, the skyscraper isn't a classical column, with a base, a shaft, and a capital. It's all shaft—which he has made an object of propulsion and energy.

Calatrava is an engineer as well as an architect and a sculptor, and his work is undergirded by a strong structural logic, separating it from, say, the work of Daniel Libeskind, whose ill-fated initial concept for the Freedom Tower at Ground Zero had an off-center spire intended to echo the outstretched arm of the Statue of Liberty. Libeskind's idea was pure imagery, a picture that the architect expected engineers to translate into reality. Calatrava's Malmö design begins with a structural motif—the human spine—and builds from there.

The Turning Torso literally has a spine, since Calatrava has designed the building with an external steel frame running up one side of it. Although from a distance the sleek white tower looks simple, its shape is anything but straightforward. Calatrava likes to describe the tower as a stack of nine white aluminum-clad "cubes," each of which is five floors high; the cubes are separated by recessed intermediate floors, so that the boxes appear to float atop each other. In truth, Calatrava's cubes are imperfect: in order to make the form appear to spiral upward, the floor plan on each level looks something like a square with a small triangle affixed to one corner. And the entire east side of the tower consists of a triangular glass projection that is supported by the external steel spine.

Calatrava's dancer, then, is more like a marionette—controlled by visible means of support. But this doesn't detract from the design: the steel bracing is one of the handsomest things about this building. The frame curves right up the full height of the tower, highlighting the fluid, flowing form in a way that Calatrava's pseudo-cubes don't fully manage to do. This exoskeleton also connects the Turning Torso to a long tradition of skyscrapers whose form illuminates their structure. Louis Kahn once referred to the Seagram Building as a beautiful lady with hidden corsets, because its bracing was tucked behind Mies van der Rohe's exquisite façade; Calatrava's lady has confidently removed her dress. For all its surface delicacy, the Malmö tower is closer kin to a building like the hulking John Hancock Center, in Chicago, whose hundred stories are wrapped in huge X-braces.

Inside, the Malmö apartments are generally what you would expect—sunny living spaces with sleek, refined European kitchens. The rooms are small, the fittings are handsome, and the views are wonderful. What makes the apartments special—but also more difficult, depending on your standpoint—is that there are almost no rectangular rooms. Living rooms are shaped like pie wedges, or have the zigzag outline of a W. Some wall-height windows are raked nearly at the angle of a car windshield. Unlike in most apartments, a person inside the Turning Torso is always aware of the building's exterior.

The Malmö tower is somewhat cluttered conceptually: the audacious stacked-box idea competes with the even more powerful notion of a twisting skyscraper. In Calatrava's design for lower Manhattan, the concept of stacked cubes is expressed more cleanly and successfully. A vertical street of ten private houses, the four-story boxes are delicately offset from one another, so that each town house will have a garden and a terrace on the roof of the unit below. (Two cubes at the bottom will contain commercial venues.) The result is not at all anthropomorphic: it is pure geometry.

Whether ten people will want to pay between thirty and forty-five million dollars to live in a large box suspended in the sky line of lower Manhattan, however, is an open question. It's not certain that the design will be built—although the developer, Frank J. Sciame, says that he expects to begin construction next spring, his financing is not yet complete. What is clear is that Calatrava—along with Richard Meier, whose glass towers in the far West Village went up in 2002—has helped create a more ambitious climate for apartment design in New York. Sleek glass condominium towers, once a rarity in white brick Manhattan, are going up even in Hell's Kitchen.

Calatrava has had a similar inspirational effect in Chicago. Although the glass tower he has produced for Christopher Carley looks nothing like the New York project—Calatrava has essentially proposed the world's largest and most beautiful drill bit—it's a similar attempt by a developer to elevate a project above the real-estate fray. (Far above: the planned height is two thousand feet.) The building would add an elegant and memorable shape to Chicago's sky line, but, as in Malmö, Calatrava has shown little interest in connecting to street life. The tower's base is bulky and unwelcoming.

If the tower is built—and Carley doesn't yet have all his financing, either—its status as the country's tallest skyscraper will mark the first time that an apartment building has held this title. It would become a symbol of the evolution of the American city from being a center of commerce to a center of culture and entertainment. Nobody is clamoring to work in high-rises anymore, but plenty of people are willing to live in them, and the fact that the biggest and most interesting towers are being built to contain apartments is a significant shift. It means, among other things, that we will finally see very tall buildings that are slender rather than chunky. (Calatrava's design will look like a needle in comparison to the Sears Tower.) Thin towers have more light inside, and, collectively, they would create a sky line less dominated by hulking masses—perhaps inspiring a renewed willingness to view the skyscraper in romantic terms. Calatrava is both a romantic and a rationalist, and his gift lies in his ability to find an equilibrium between these two poles.

The Chicago tower's official name is a pedestrian one: the Fordham Spire. But it may well acquire a more glamorous title. Carley originally proposed naming the building for his famous architect. The offer was declined, Carley said. But, he went on, Tina Calatrava, the architect's wife, said that it didn't matter: "Everyone is going to call it the Calatrava anyway." ♦

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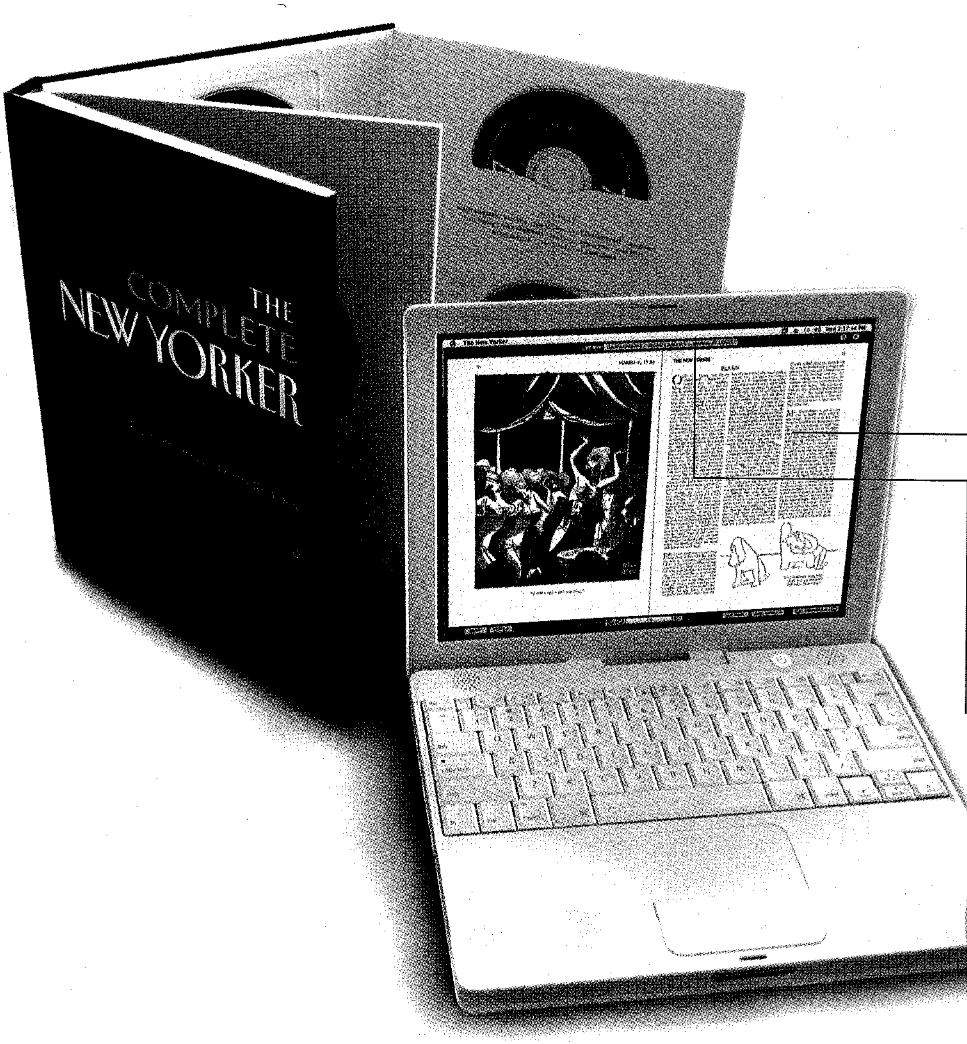

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## THE THEATRE

# RACE RECORDS

*Soldiers and snobs on parade.*

BY JOHN LAHR

"The realization that Negroes are no better nor no worse, and at times just as boring as everybody else, will hardly kill off the population of the nation," Zora Neale Hurston wrote in a 1950 essay calling for a new kind of storytelling to expose "the internal lives and emotions of the Negroes." America, she argued, was always prepared to accept portraits of the exceptional Negro and of the quaint Negro. In both literature and drama, however, these narratives violated the most cherished of aesthetic goals: to hold a mirror up to nature. Hurston's droll essay, which was a salvo at American Anglo-Saxons' lack of curiosity about real black life, seems to me also to have some relevance for African-American playwrights who write from the outside, rather than the inside, and feel compelled to impose an ideology on their characters, rather than letting those characters discover their own complex meaning. Charles Fuller's 1981 Pulitzer Prize-winning melodrama, "A Soldier's Play" (revived at the Second Stage), set on an Army base in Louisiana in 1944, is a case in point; the play is really an essay in military mufti, which appears to disabuse us of racial myths even as it reinforces them. This slick drama brings the quaint Negro and the exceptional Negro face to face, like integers from the old formula which fail to factor out into a new kind of narrative equation.

The quaint Negro here is Private C. J. Memphis (Mike Colter), a superstitious, happy-go-lucky, blues-strumming, ball-playing, rural Mississippi recruit identified as "a clown in blackface! A niggah!" by the hectoring, sadistic black Sergeant Vernon Waters (James McDaniel), who frames Memphis for murder in order to get him out of his company. Before the play opens, the auditorium fills with the voices of the Andrews Sisters singing "Don't Sit Under the Apple Tree"; the sweetness of the sound is a direct contrast to the sourness of the American black experience we are about to witness. The lights come up on the pie-eyed Waters floundering on the ground, laughing to himself and muttering, "They'll still hate you! They still hate you. . . . They still hate you!" Someone appears in the shadows and shoots him dead. The pronominal question (just who are "they"—who is the hated and who is doing the hating?) hangs over the rest of the evening, which unfolds in flashback, like a TV detective story, with the exceptional Negro—the play's eloquent narrator, Captain Richard Davenport (Taye Diggs), a Howard University-educated lawyer and a sort of Jackie Robinson of jurisprudence—unravelling the mystery as he interviews the members of Waters's platoon. In the process, Davenport also reveals how racism can drive both blacks and whites mad.

The institutional racism of the military is transparent: the troops are segregated. The psychological effects of being debased and brutalized in a second-class life are harder to see. Here, they play themselves out in Waters's self-loathing abusiveness. "If it wasn't for you Southern niggahs yessahin', bowin' and scrapin', scratchin' your heads, white folks wouldn't think we were all fools!" he tells his men at one point. With his bowwow military punctilio, which has earned him the nickname Ole Stone Ass, Waters has adopted the racist scorn of his oppressors. "White man runnin' rings around us," he says. "We need lawyers, doctors—generals—senators! Stop thinkin' like a niggah!" Waters is a victim turned victimizer. He humiliates, betrays, abuses his power. He tries to goad the most rebellious of his soldiers, Private First Class Melvin Peterson (Anthony Mackie), into a fistfight. Peterson, however, names Waters's game and links it neatly to slavery. "White man gives them a little job as a servant—close to the big house—and when the boss ain't looking, old copycat niggahs act like they the new owner! They take to soundin' like the boss—

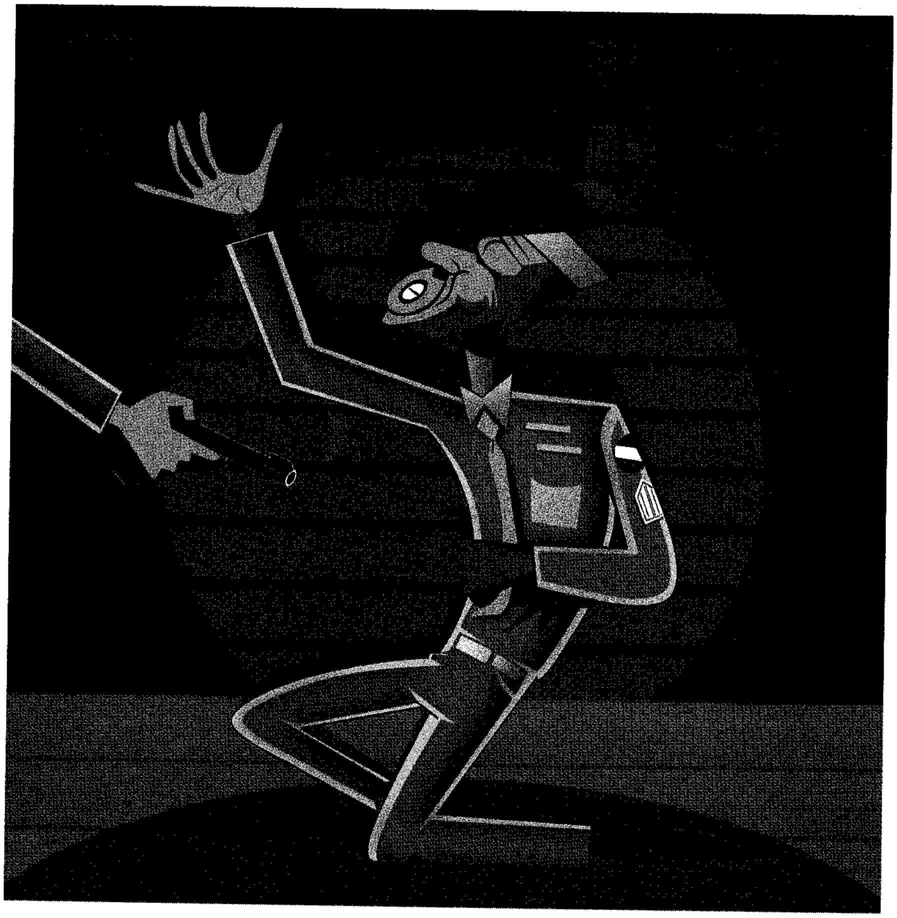
shoutin', orderin' people aroun'—and when it comes to you and me—they sell us to continue favor," he says. With his lying breath, Waters concedes the point. "You got to be like them," he says. "And I was! I was—but the rules are fixed!"

In contrast to Waters, Davenport, well played by Diggs, is a cool, eloquent cusomer with nary a wrinkle on his brow or on his uniform. As if to elevate himself o iconic status, he wears sunglasses indoors ("I like these glasses—they're like MacArthur's," he says), a swaggering romantic touch that is as militarily implausible as it is theatrically satisfying. Davenport is potent and penetrating. Not once, n the course of the evening, does he bow o insult, pressure, doubt, or anger. At one point, his white stick-figure counterpart, Captain Charles Taylor (Steven Pasquale), says, "I don't want to offend you, but I just cannot get used to it—the bars, the uniform—being in charge just doesn't look right on Negroes!" But Davenport is a master both of himself and of the system, a superb specimen of African-American manhood adapted to white society. "I asked you a question!" Taylor says in one scene. "I don't have to answer it," Davenport responds. He da (mythic) man.

From the distance of nearly a quarter of a century, it's hard to understand the mpact of "A Soldier's Play." Its notional characters are given only a wash of personality and psychology. The casting in this production, which is directed by o Bonney, is uneven. The actors are proficient, but there's no chemistry between the antagonists, and the stage-managed situation fails to sizzle. At the end of the play, Taylor eats a little Jim Crow. "I was wrong . . . about Negroes being in charge," he says. And Davenport has just the right heroic last word. "Oh, you'll get used to it," he says. "You can bet your ass on that, Captain—you will get used to it." This kind of hollow progressive bravado is for the movies, not for life. As the federal government's response to the hurricane in Louisiana showed the world, institutional racism is a concept that white America has yet to acknowledge.

In one scene of "A Soldier's Play," Waters calls Memphis "an ignorant, low-class geechy," and Peterson interjects, "Where you from, England?" The line gets a laugh; England, it seems, is synonymous with the detached, the out of touch, the buffoonish. As if to prove the point, Alan Ayckbourn's 1973 hit, "Absurd Person Singular," has been revived by the Manhattan Theatre Club at the Biltmore, under the skillful direction of John Tillinger. The play, which exposes a bevy of oafish parochial bourgeois narcissists, takes place in three kitchens over a series of three successive Christmas parties. At one of the parties, Marion Brewster-Wright (Deborah Rush), the boozy, fluting wife of a bank manager, inspecting the dial of a new washing machine that has been neatly installed under a D.I.Y. shelf, says, "What's this? Whites . . . coloreds . . . my God, it's apartheid." Yes, we're in daft, snobbish, suburban England, that suffocating hodgepodge of middle-class fatuity otherwise known as Ayckbourn Territory. The characters here have, on the face of it, no imagination, no access to their feelings, no understanding of the violence they do to each other. On this tight little island, the only color that's important—and therefore rarely discussed—is the color of money.

The show begins in the upwardly mobile household of Sidney (Alan Ruck) and Jane, as Jane (the excellent Clea Lewis) manically polishes the surfaces of her prefab kitchen. Surfaces are what this farce is about. The gradations of difference—in consumer products, speech, expectation—are the signals of class distinction, of how prestige in Britain is won or lost. Ayckbourn knows how to construct funny stage pictures: in the second act, for instance, while the unnoticing guests prattle on around her, Eva (Mireille Enos), the wife of an architect, mute with grief over the collapse of her marriage, makes various attempts at suicide—flinging herself at the window, at the stove, and at a butcher knife propped up in a drawer. Ayckbourn's technique is expert; the play itself is stale, and the nuanced tableau of British snobbery is mostly lost on an American audience. Why remount a chestnut of the provincial British reps? No Broadway producer ever went broke slipping the audience a placebo, but even for a bromide "Absurd Person Singular" is weak stuff. ♦


*James McDaniel as an abusive sergeant in Charles Fuller's "A Soldier's Play."*

THE CURRENT CINEMA

# TROUBLEMAKERS

*“Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang,” “North Country.”*

BY ANTHONY LANE

On the edge of MacArthur Park, in Los Angeles, a young woman runs across the traffic, after dark, dressed in a sawn-off Santa suit trimmed with tufts of fur. Her other accessories include festive red panty hose and a loaded gun. Her name is Harmony Faith Lane, and if she were one of my relatives I would look forward to Christmas a whole lot more. Sadly, she is a fictional being, lodged in the world according to Shane Black—a livid, pulpish environment where failure to possess a gun is, if not a criminal offense, at least a crime against style. Black is a man of parts. “As an actor,” according to Warner Bros. publicists, he was “the first to be eviscerated by the Predator,” which in industry terms means that he once shook hands with Arnold Schwarzenegger. As a screenwriter, he was responsible for “Lethal Weapon,” and may God have mercy on his soul.

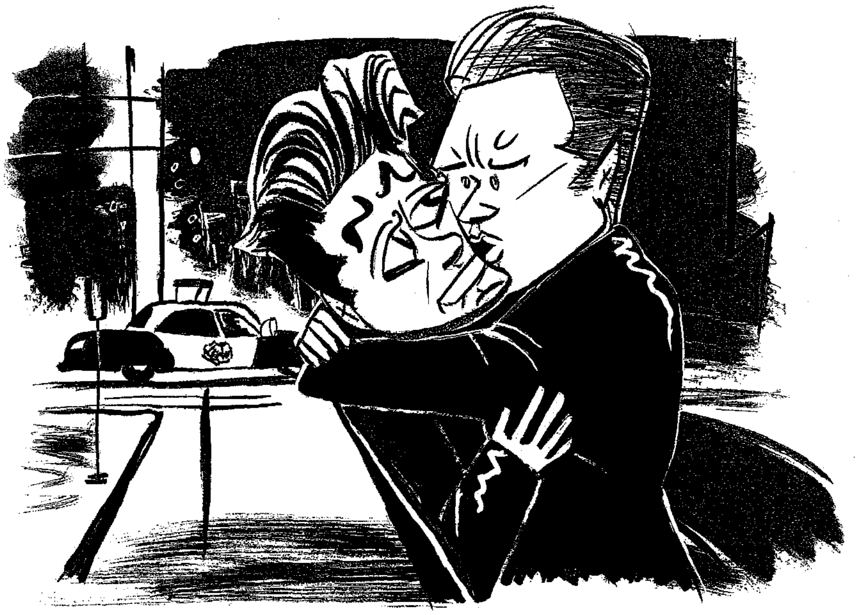
Now he has directed his own script. “Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang” stars Robert Downey, Jr., as Harry Lockhart, a petty thief, and better at the pettiness than at the thieving. One charm of this film is that its hero is useless at everything but smoking—not much of a talent, given that circumstances have spun him from the East Coast to the West and landed him in L.A. We first see him at a party, where he defends the honor of a drunken girl, challenges her aggressor, and gets his face mashed in. If that strikes you as a wimpish take on the old Philip Marlowe rule—that somebody should make the effort to uphold the dignity of others, one’s own dignity having been poured down the sink—then you’d be right. Harry is a shirker and a shrinker, low-grade Bogart cut with shreds of Bob Hope, and Black pays homage to Chandler throughout the plot. He chops it into chunks and names each one accordingly. “Day Two: The Lady in the Lake,” or “Day Three: The Little Sister.”

The drunken girl is our old friend Harmony (Michelle Monaghan). A while ago, she made the trek from Indiana in search of her fortune. Now her sister is in town, too, but she’s dead—in a hotel room, naturally, hotels being like mass graves in the land of pulp. If you ask me how Harry gets fouled up in this case, I couldn’t tell you. What roughly occurs is that he flees a crime scene, stumbles into a movie audition, earns a screen test, and finds himself paired with a private dick known as Gay Perry (Val Kilmer), who preps him for the test by teaching him the basics of investigation. All of which takes him back to a crime scene. If you’re trying to squeeze this tale for logic, forget it. Black is not aiming to make sense. He’s too busy stirring together the juice of a hundred thrillers and cackling like a witch.

By rights, “Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang” should be the most annoying movie of the year. It keeps stopping, starting, and scrolling back. It hops between plot strands like a flea on a dog. At one point, the frame of the image freezes halfway up the screen. “My name is Harry Lockhart, and I’ll be your narrator,” Harry says, adding, “I don’t see another goddam narrator, so pipe down.” He likes to mock the sweltering absurdities of the plot, but then so did Marlowe, more than sixty years ago, in “The Lady in the Lake”:

> “I’ve never liked this scene,” I said. “Detective confronts murderer. Murderer produces gun, points same at detective. Murderer tells detective the whole sad story, with the idea of shooting him at the end of it.”

Chandler knew in his bones that detective fiction was hardly worth a spoof. How could it be, when it lay only inches away from self-parody in the first place? You could be as cocky as you liked, bu you still had a tale to tell, and what links “The Lady in the Lake” to “Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang” is that both put so much time and sweat into smoke-ringed cleverness that they suddenly panic, gather themselves, and hurry the characters into a final cluster of explanations, like a man trying to finish a crossword before his train reaches the station.



*Robert Downey, Jr., and Val Kilmer pair up in the thriller “Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang.”*

But here’s the joke: “Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang” is not a bust. You may have the occasional, unpleasant sensation of having wandered into the Annual General Meeting of Hollywood Smart-asses Incorporated, but you come out smiling. The reason is threefold: Val Kilmer, Michelle Monaghan, and Robert Downey, Jr., all of them yakking their heads off. As Harmony, Monaghan is a real find; she winces at the bum notes of L.A., yet she quips back at Harry as if they were soloists riffing on the same tune. (Their spotting of look-alikes in a fashionable bar—he points out "the Native American Joe Pesci" behind her—is a rare delight.) Meanwhile, for those of us who liked the funny, whippy Kilmer in "Top Secret!," back in 1984, it's a relief to learn that the heavyset, sideburned Kilmer can still steal laughs like a pro, and the gay patter between him and Downey is both perfect for the fussy, disapproving milieu of the private eye and nicely keyed into everything that Chandler often thought but never dared express. "This isn't good cop and bad cop," says Harry. "This is fag and New Yorker."

As for Downey, he is the leading protean in American movies. Reports of his offscreen jinks are of interest only insofar as they confirm, or feed, his life onscreen. Watching a Downey film, I look at his eyes, as restless as Cary Grant's, listen to his wired delivery, with its hiccups and bass slurs, and follow his easy tacking back and forth between sexual tastes, and I see not just an invincible dread of boredom—the kind that might well be sated by drugs, or by keeping a gun in his truck. I see somebody whose only conceivable home is the movie business. No other star could have assumed the role of Harry, because in more secure hands the slippage of his desires, not to mention his wild slalom from criminal to crime-buster, would have seemed merely silly, whereas to a changeling like Downey nothing could be more natural. The fact that Harry becomes an actor without realizing, or knowing why, or even particularly wanting to be an actor, is a delicious comment on Downey's helpless predicament. I wouldn't trust him to look after my handkerchief, but I'll watch him in anything, and that is why "Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang"—smug as it is, and more like a day in the reptile house than a night at the movies—remains a slithery treat.

To bring a class-action lawsuit against a mining company for sexual harassment is hard enough, but you try getting people to see a movie *about* a class-action lawsuit brought against a mining company for sexual harassment. Such is the challenge that the director Niki Caro has set herself. "North Country" stars Charlize Theron as Josey Aimes, who walks out of a punch-drunk marriage, takes her two children, and drives to Minnesota. There she returns to her mother, Alice (Sissy Spacek), and her gravelly father, Hank (Richard Jenkins), the kind of guy who thinks that a wife with a black eye must somehow be to blame.

Hank works at the iron mines nearby. So does Glory (Frances McDormand), an old friend of Josey's, who persuades her to follow suit. The job is all grease and grime, but it pays well. The problem is that, from management down to rockface, the miners don't want females on their turf; a fear and loathing of women seems grained into the men's skins, like dirt, and there is a primitive, almost infantile filth-fixation in the way that they vent that scorn, daubing fecal graffiti on the women's locker-room walls. Josey hits back, which makes her more of a pest than a hero. Not until she airs her grievance in court, with the help of Bill White (Woody Harrelson), a local lawyer, does she find out who her friends are. There is so much tamping down here, so many seams of discontent, that the uplifting scenes of the finale seem to have floated in from another film. Theron, who is fast becoming the queen of angry victimhood, can barely remember how to look pleased.

"North Country" is beautifully shot by Chris Menges, whose credits run from "Kes" to "Dirty Pretty Things," yet in this case the beauty—light shafting in from the ceiling of the plant, heaps of taconite gleaming like gold—is not always helpful, tugging against the wish to record a wretched truth. How pretty should dirty things be? As with "Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang," however, you cannot help being stirred by the reach and depth, the constant rebuffs to sloppiness, of a strong ensemble. Spacek never lets the mother's adherence to good form tighten her into a tyrant or a shrew, and, when she cracks, she cracks quickly and almost noiselessly, like a teacup. In the role of Glory, McDormand could have turned mushy when she grows sick, but she ups her rueful humor instead; as for Sean Bean, playing her husband, there is no mistaking the relief with which, after a résumé full of hams and hunks, he embraces this unexplosive role. The scene in his downstairs workshop, where he delivers a gentle lecture on hatred to Josey's son, is the best thing Bean has ever done, and he owes Niki Caro a drink. And Michelle Monaghan, fresh from "Kiss Kiss, Bang Bang," gives us the heartbreaking Sherry, a fellow-sufferer alongside Josey, barely grown up but already ground down. It's a long way from Harmony Faith Lane. ◆

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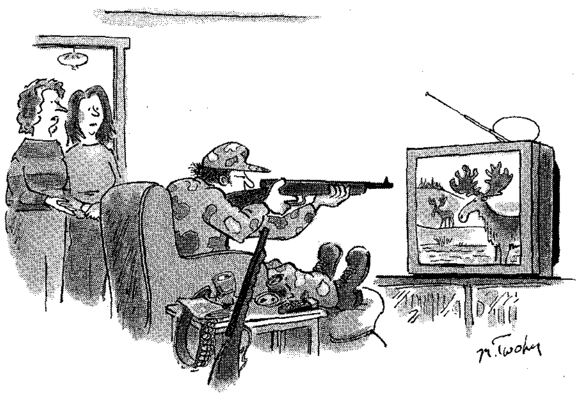
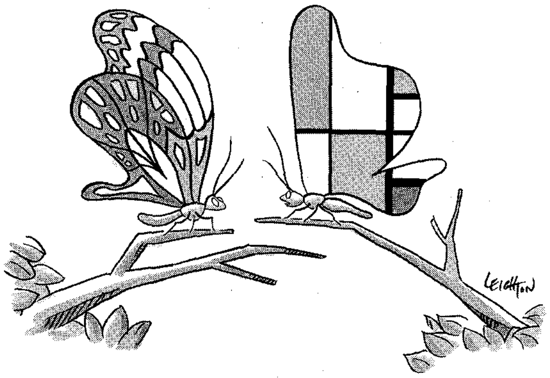
## CARTOON CAPTION CONTEST

*Each week, we provide a cartoon in need of a caption. You, the reader, submit a caption, we choose three finalists, and you vote for your favorite. Caption submissions for this week's cartoon, by P. C. Vey, must be received by Sunday, October 30th. Finalists in the October 17th contest appear below; go online to vote. We will announce the winner, along with the finalists in this week's contest, in the November 14th issue. The winner will be given a signed print of the cartoon. Any U.S. resident age eighteen or over can enter or vote. To do so, and to read the complete rules, visit www.newyorker.com/captioncontest.*

### THE WINNING CAPTION



*"This is why I always dress in bright colors."*
Simon Fraser, Philadelphia, Pa.



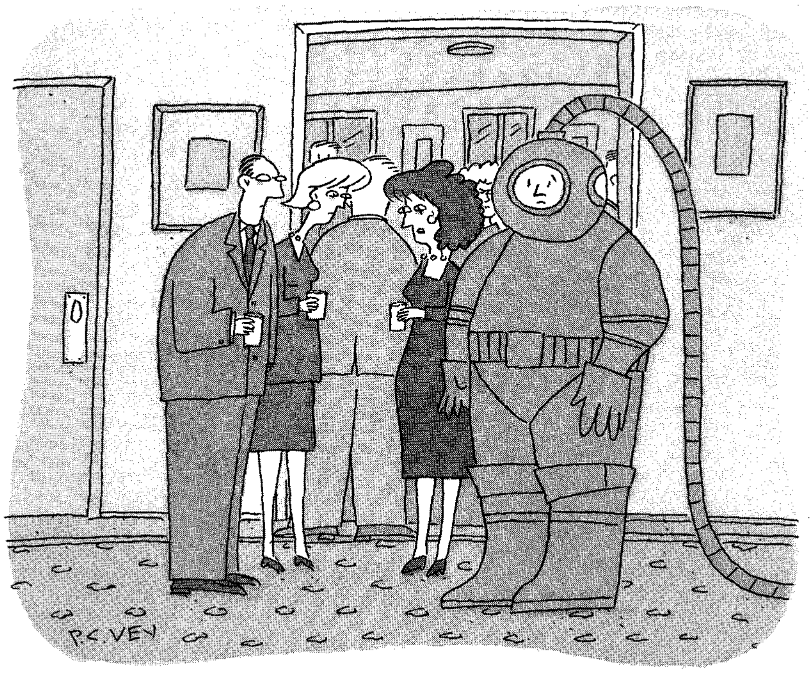
### THE FINALISTS

*"But how will we raise the kids?"*
Steve Hoff, Lake Bluff, Ill.

*"You think this is weird? My sister looks like a soup can."*
Ivan McLean, Portland, Ore.

*"It's not traditional, but I find it attracts a more mature type of female."*
Carl Giffels, Rehoboth Beach, Del.

### THIS WEEK'S CONTEST



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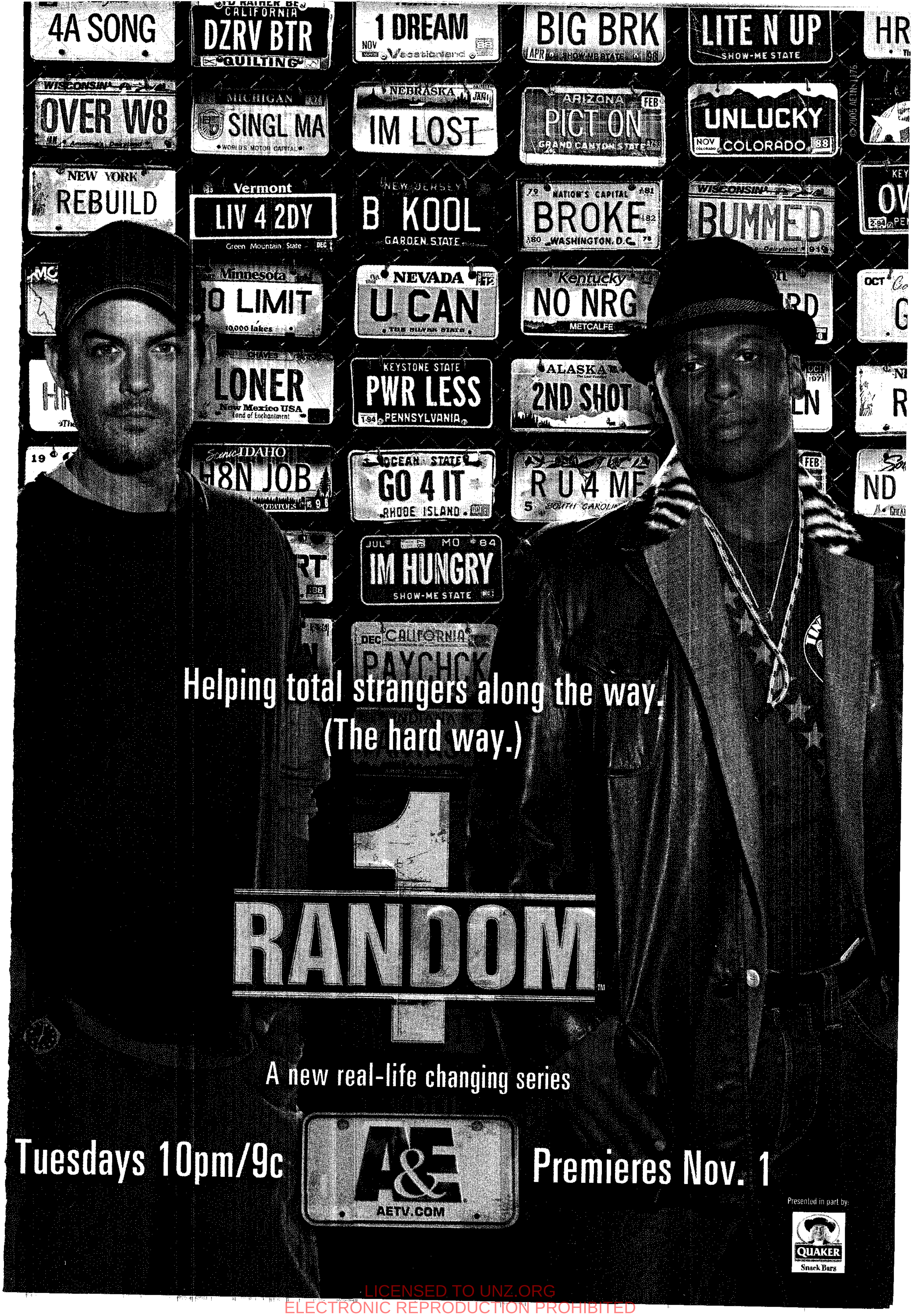
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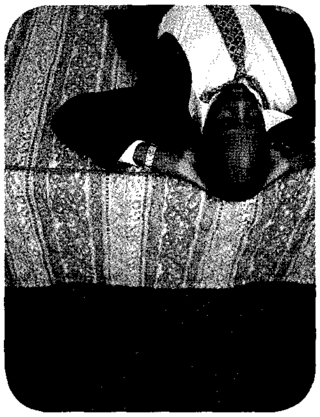

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